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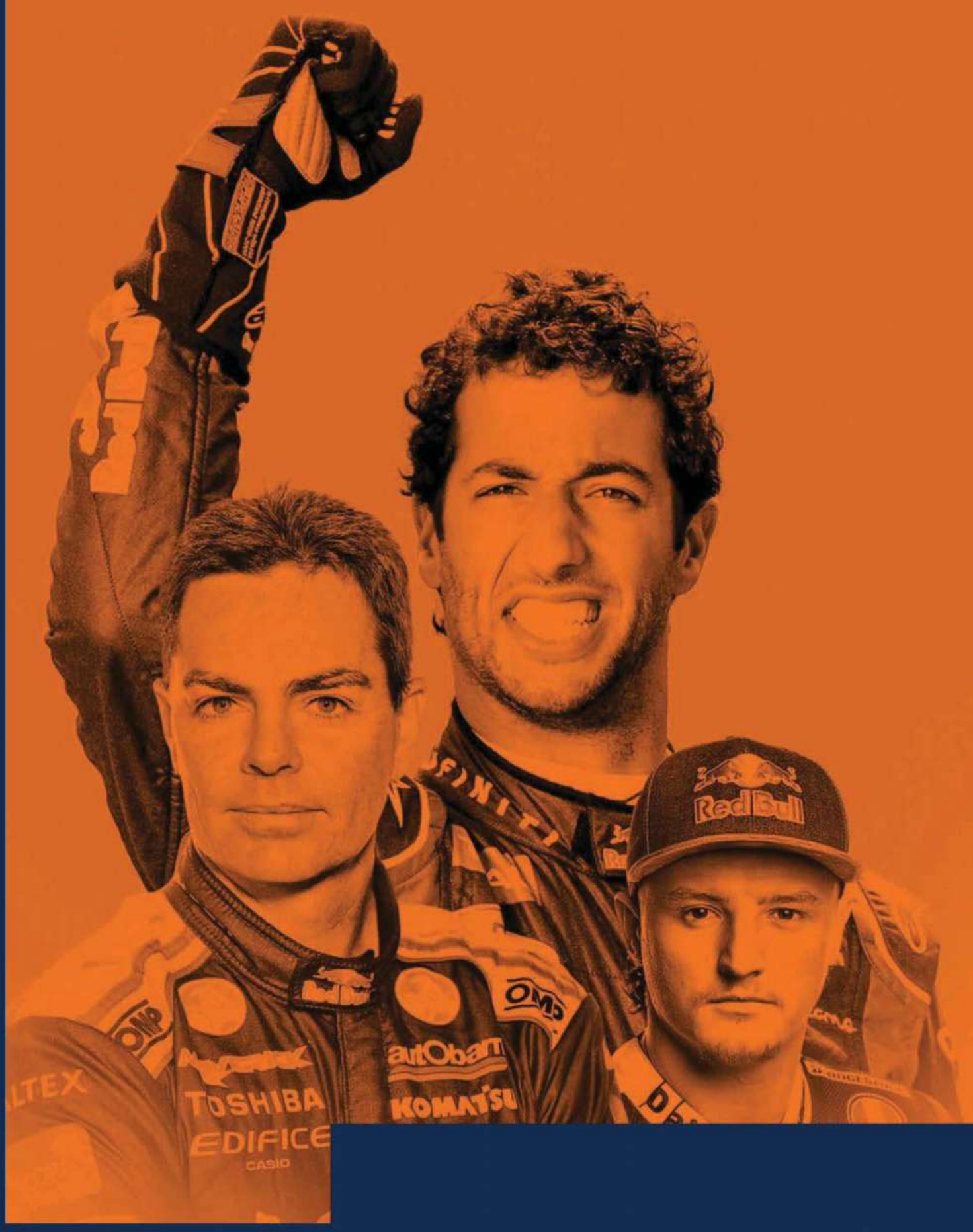

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TELFO

SIMON TELFORD

THERE are many excellent things about working at *Street Machine*, but the very best part is handing over the keys of a hot muscle car to a reader. I've never had the pleasure until a few weeks ago, when I delivered our Dodge Dart Swinger project over to Kane Jones-Murphy at his home on the south coast of NSW.

It was a bit of a hectic time, with the thrash to finish the Dodge, followed by a whirlwind trip to Red CentreNATS, then bolting up to Sydney to register the Dart and then deliver it to Kane. And then the next day, *Hot Rod* Drag Week started in the US, with Scotty and Pov firing over squillions of videos and photos from the event that Aiden and I then loaded up to streetmachine.com.au. My laptop was certainly feeling the pain, and my iPhone decided to check out altogether.

To say Kane was happy to finally drive the Dart is an understatement – he was giggling when we went for the first drive. His youngest son was also stoked, but mostly because he nabbed the plush Angry Birds pig that has been dangling from the Dart's rearview mirror since we first acquired the car. Kane comes from an automotive background, having mucked around with modified four-wheel-drives in his younger days, and with his dad and stepdad both being car guys.

Kane reckons he's going to hang on to the Dart for as long as possible, and already has the car booked in to be fitted with child restraints for the little ones. Congratulations Kane and thanks to everyone who contributed to the car, including Glenlyon Motors, Precision International, Powerhouse Engines, Paul Rogers Transmissions, McDonald Brothers, Edelbrock, Aussie Desert Coolers, Extracted Performance Exhausts and Lowe Fabrications.

No time to rest, though, with *Street Machine* Drag Challenge fast approaching. Out of the 100-plus racers that registered their interest, we have a total of 40 paid-up entrants as we go to print,

TO SAY KANE WAS HAPPY TO FINALLY DRIVE THE DART IS AN UNDERSTATEMENT – HE WAS GIGGLING WHEN WE WENT FOR THE FIRST DRIVE

with a few more furiously wrenching on their cars to get them ready in time, fuelled by energy drinks and countless hours watching the Drag Week live feed. We make no secret of the fact that Drag Challenge is directly inspired by *Hot Rod*'s event. Australia's tighter rego laws mean we'll never see the kind of wild machinery that the likes of Bailey, Lutz and Larson run, but that isn't to say there aren't a lot of very interesting cars entered in the event.

We've got a gaggle of cool cars from all over Australia set for Drag Challenge this year; the only state not represented so far is the Northern Territory. Almost all of the 18 entrants from last year signed up again, so we'll see Terry Seng, Quentin Feast and Tristan Triccas battling it out again, and they'll be joined a bunch of new hopefuls.

Rodney Browitt and John Di Mauro will be engaging in a battle of the farm trucks, as their rusty turbocharged farm utes go head-to-head; Brad Pettitt will be bringing his EH sedan all the way over from WA to have a go; and Ben Walker will have to put his Valiant hardtop on a boat from Tasmania. There's a good mix of Holden, Ford and Chrysler this year, with the entry list full of Commodores, Toranas, Capris, El Caminos and even a couple of Dodges; throw in a hot rod and some classic American muscle and you've got the makings of a serious competition list.

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PHONE
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EDITOR
Simon Telford

KEYBOARD, CAMERAS AND SPANNERS
Scott Taylor

ART ATTACK
Leah Gionis, Gavin Morrison

SUB-EDITORS
Brett Collingwood, Tristan Tancredi

WEB GURUS
Bonnie Jacks, Ryan Lewis

ED ASSISTANT
Aiden Taylor

CHAMPION CONTRIBUTORS
Mark Arblaster, Autoshotz, Peter Bateman, Mark Bramley, Victor Bray, Michelle Bright, Andrew Broadley, Cackling Pipes, Dave Carey, Simon Davidson, Dragphotos, Andrew Goodwin, Matthew Howell, Aden Jacobi, Nathan Jacobs, Steve Kelly, Bob Kotmel, Simon Major, Bryce Michelmore, Craig Parker, Povi Pullinen, Geoff Seddon, Chris Thorogood, Glenn Torrens, Noel Tuckey, Boris Viskovic

COVER IMAGE
Chris Thorogood

GROUP SALES MANAGER
Matthew Rice
(02) 9263 9706, mrice@bauer-media.com.au

BRAND SALES MANAGER
Joseph Lenthall
(02) 8114 9421, jlenthall@bauer-media.com.au

VICTORIAN SALES MANAGER
Bruce Williams, Overdrive Media
0418 349 555, bruce@overdrivemedia.com.au

QUEENSLAND SALES MANAGER
Todd Anderson
0409 630 733

SOUTH AUSTRALIAN SALES MANAGER
Nick Lenthall
0439 485 835, nick.lenthall@bauertrader.com.au

WESTERN AUSTRALIAN SALES MANAGER
Greg Boase
0408 516 176, greg.boase@bauertrader.com.au

AGENCY SALES MANAGER - NSW
Max Kolomiiets
(02) 8275 6486, max.kolomiiets@bauertrader.com.au

AGENCY SALES MANAGER - VIC
Andrea de Kauwe
(03) 9567 4388, andrea.dekauwe@bauertrader.com.au

MARKETING MANAGER
Siobhan McNab

MARKETING ASSISTANT
Maegan Kinson

PROMOTIONS
Natalie Frazer

CIRCULATION MANAGER
Stuart Jones

PRODUCTION CONTROLLER
Lynda Jordan

OPERATIONS & FINANCE MANAGER
Richard Wein

EDITORIAL OPERATIONS MANAGER
Adam Morrissey

ASSOCIATE PUBLISHER
Ged Bulmer

BAUER TRADER CEO
Keith Falconer

BAUER MEDIA CEO
David Goodchild

BAUER

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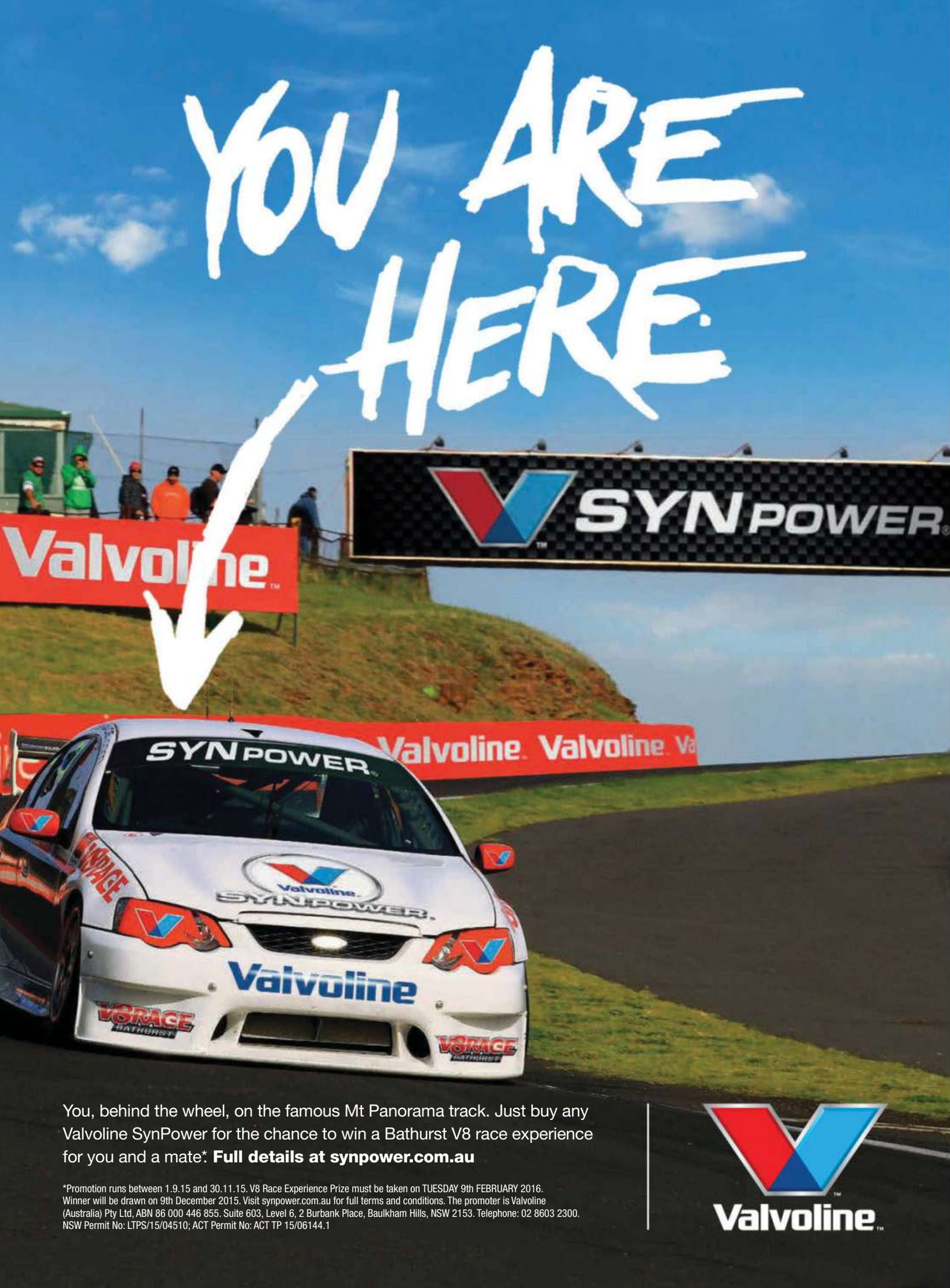

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STORY SIMON TELFORD PHOTOS MICHELLE BRIGHT

KING OF THE STREET

> VICTORIA'S TOUGHEST STREET CARS DUKE IT OUT AT HEATHCOTE PARK

STREET Machine's Drag Challenge is coming up fast (23-27 October), with around 40 paid-up entrants and a bunch of other enthusiasts furiously thrashing to get their cars ready in time. There are road-registered weapons coming from all over the country, but with the event being entirely held in Victoria this year, there are going to be a lot of Mexican cars in the chase. With the event spanning five days and covering more than 1500km of road driving, it's a big financial obligation and one that requires fast cars to be ANDRA-teched.

For those not suited to Drag Challenge, the next best thing down south is Heathcote's King Of The Street series, which is put on by Mustang racer John Colaidis and the guys from Tunnel Vision Turbocharging. The third KOTS meet was held in September and it had a very healthy turn-out.

The rules are simple: The cars have to be registered with full interior and working street equipment (no pulling headlights or seats), and run a radial tyre (any size) and a full exhaust. Previously, pump fuel was a requirement, but it has now been dropped due to the difficulty in policing it. Nitrous had also previously been banned, but was allowed this time around. That said, turbocharging is the thing at KOTS, with 35 out of 45 cars wearing hairdryers.

Reigning champion of both KOTS and Drag Challenge, Quentin Feast, didn't make it to defend his KOTS crown, leaving Frank Marchese's twin-turbo XW as the favourite for the event. While the Falcon has a 7.54sec timeslip to its credit, the question was: Could he get all 2200hp to the ground?

Frank must have thought he was at Powercruise, because at one point he performed a massive

MAIN: Frank Marchese took out the third KOTS meeting in a canter, piloting last month's *SM* co-cover car. When will we see this thing run a six on radials and leaf springs?

half-track powerskid. He outclassed the field, dispatching Brandon Zito's neat LC Torana in the V8 final. With that done, Frank lined up against the winner of the six-cylinder class, Chris Kurumolla in his RB30-powered, mid-8.0sec VN Commodore. Frank took the overall win.

As fast as Frank's XW is, he is unable to take on Drag Challenge this year, leaving Terry Seng's VC Commodore as the fastest car to have entered. Quentin Feast hasn't been idle though, and has run his twin-turbo Torana to a new PB of 8.2sec at Calder Park. Rest assured it's going to be one hell of an event!

01: Launch of the day went to Mick Watt in his UTRIED Ford Cortina, running a new PB of 8.9@156mph. It has been a long time coming, and Mick's crew were over the moon. Check out the video on streetmachine.com.au

02: Steve Thomas's LSA-powered VK is the cover car for the new issue of *Street Machine LSX Tuner*. At KOTS Steve ran a 9.52@149mph, then gave the car a small shot of nitrous for a 9.49@139mph

03: Drag Challenge veteran Brendan Cherry had issues after his third pass with a dead injector and lost a piston, but managed to record an 8.91sec pass on an early shut-off and rolled through at 150mph

NEWS FRONT

NOVEMBER 2015: ALL THE NEWS THAT MATTERS

STORY STEVE TITCUMB PHOTOS BRIGHT DESIGN

ROADSTER WON!

> BITCHING '32 ROADSTER FROM CRUISING NATIONALS HAS A NEW OWNER

THE inaugural Cruising Nationals was held in Deniliquin in April this year, with music, drag racing, lots of street cruising and even some burnouts making up the action. The centrepiece of the show, however, was the draw of the event's raffle car, a righteous '32 roadster.

While red Deuce roadsters are hardly thin on the ground, this one was built in a muscular 60s drag style. We covered the start of the build in *Street Machine Hot Rod 12* and we tallied up over $65,000 in parts alone, including the steel Brookville reproduction body, Scandinavian Street Rods chassis, 383ci Chev donk and Tremec five-speed transmission. Then we featured the finished product in *Hot Rod 14*, and what a stunner it turned out to be.

It won't meet the letter of the law for rego in Victoria, as the boys putting it together decided that style was more important than conforming to some bureaucrat's notion of how a hot rod should look. That's a simple fix, though!

At the end of the build, the car was valued at $130K, and the lucky winner was David Knoll from NSW. Other winners included Paul Warburton, who picked up a trip to Palm Cove in Cairns, and Shannon Eastwood, who received a $5K Rocket Industries voucher. Congrats lads!

The event is on again 15-17 April, 2016. More great prizes will be available in the raffle, headed by a Roush Mustang. For more info, check out thecruisingnationals.com.

NEXT MONTH!

IN THE December mag, we announce the winner of the 2015 Valvoline Street Machine Of The Year award! We'll also announce who won the VIP trip to *Street Machine* Summernats 29. Big thanks to everyone who voted!

You'll also find coverage of Supernats, Chopped and Performance Car Mania, just for starters. Feature cars will include an LS-powered XW Falcon (sorry Ford fans), the mighty ITSWAR Holden Gemini and a super-neat and tough Valiant hardtop out of South Oz. It goes on sale 12 November. Catch ya then!

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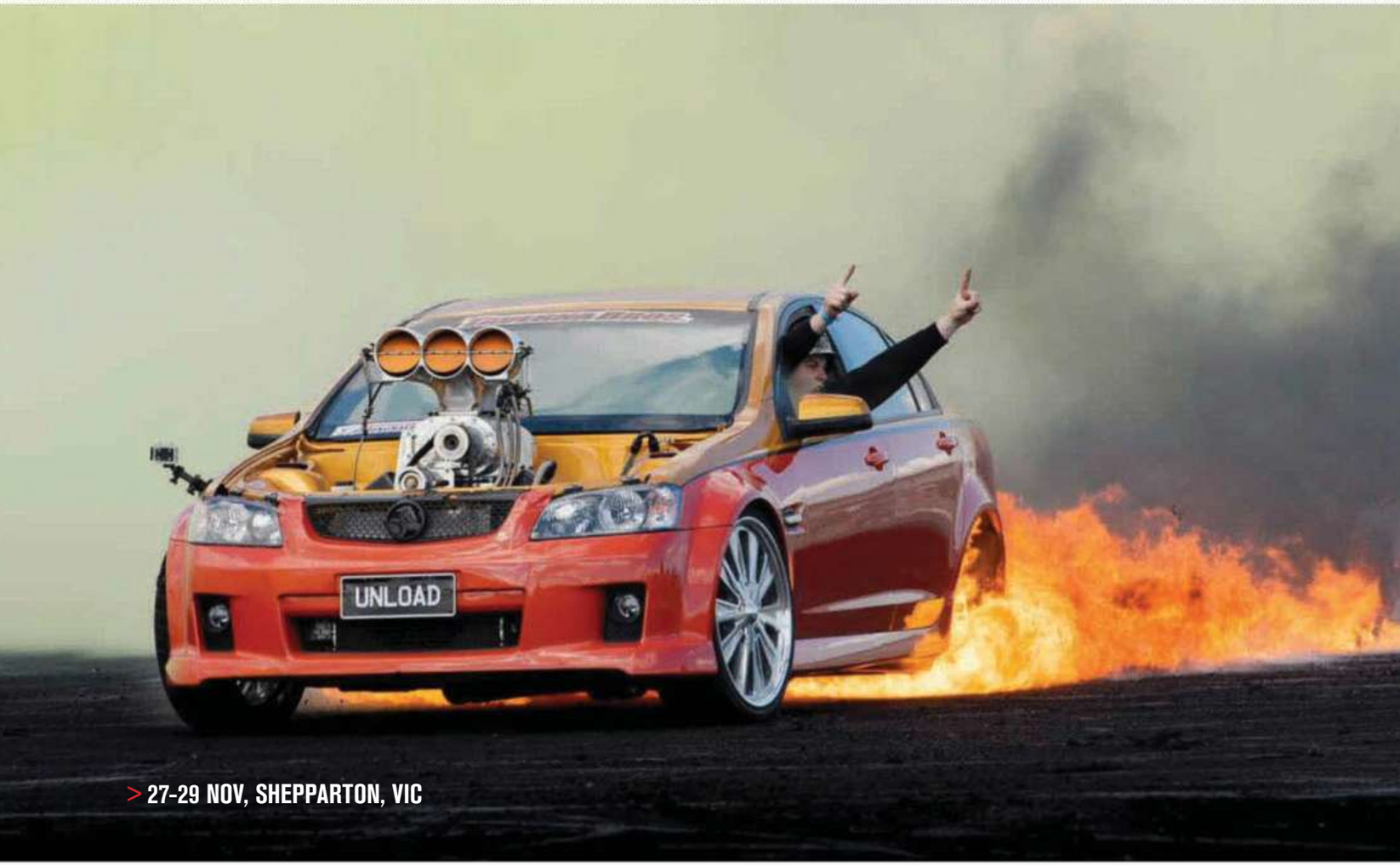

> 27-29 NOV, SHEPPARTON, VIC

18 OCT, WARRAGUL, VIC
Classic Chrome Bumper Show 'n' Shine, Logan Park Showground. Contact cammos@bigpond.com.au.

23-25 OCT, MELBOURNE, VIC
Motorclassica, Royal Exhibition Building. Visit www.motorclassica.com.au.

24-25 OCT, WAGGA WAGGA, NSW
Bonnie & Clyde Rods, Rats & Rides, Wagga Showgrounds. Visit www.autofest.com.au.

25 OCT, BUNBURY, WA
Annual Bunbury Auto Show 'n' Shine, Bunbury Recreation Ground. Visit www.ignitionsouthwest.com.

25 OCT, COOROY, QLD
Cooroy Car Show & Swap Meet, Johnson Park. Contact Daryl 0407 588 697 or Steve 0432 741 400.

25 OCT, CHURCHILL, VIC
Eighth Hazelwood Car & Bike Show, Caskin Park. Contact Catherine 0402 320 153 or Jane 0413 244 861.

25 OCT, MARSDEN PARK, NSW
All Chrome Bumpers Car Show 2015, Hamrun Club, 100 Jackson Street. Contact Rob 0416 061 967.

25 OCT, SWAN HILL, VIC
Swan Hill Show 'n' Shine, Riverside Park. Visit www.swanhillshowandshine.com.au.

25 OCT, WERRIBEE, VIC
Cancer Council 5th Annual Show 'n' Shine, Werribee Civic Centre. Contact Nick 0431 969 757.

31 OCT, BURSWOOD, WA
West Coast Lowdown Hall-O-Weird, Koolroom Gallery. Visit www.westcoastlowdown.com.au.

31 OCT, TOORADIN, VIC
Tooradin Car & Bike Show 'n' Shine, Rutter Park Memorial Reserve. Contact Jane 0404 213 997.

31 OCT, WERRINGTON COUNTY, NSW
Queen of Hearts Charity Car Show 2015, Henry Sports Club. Contact Michele 0423 709 630.

01 NOV, JUNEE, NSW
Junee Motor Club Charity Show 'n' Shine, Junee Showground. Contact 0487 321 171.

01 NOV, HUSKISSON, NSW
Oliver Tiyce Bike & Car Show, Huskisson Sports Field. Contact Blake 0421 388 144.

01 NOV, ROCKLEA, QLD
QHRP Swap Meet & Show 'n' Shine, Rocklea Showgrounds. Contact Lloyd 0477 777 237.

01 NOV, ROOTY HILL, NSW
Lions Pride Charity Car Show, Carousel Hotel. Visit www.lionspridensw1.com.

06-08 NOV, BRIGHT, VIC
Bright Rod Run, Bright Town Centre. Visit www.brightsiconicrodrun.com.au.

07 NOV, MUDGEE, NSW
Mudgee Motorfest, Mudgee Showground. Contact Glenn 0411 047 825.

07 NOV, YASS, NSW
Classic Yass Motor Show 2015, Banjo Patterson Park. Contact (02) 6227 1111.

08 NOV, SCORESBY, VIC
Victoria's State Van Titles, Caribbean Gardens. Contact Ian 0403 923 277.

14-15 NOV, SINGLETON, NSW
Singleton Motorfest, Singleton Showgrounds. Contact Jono 0417 176 982 or Shane 0411 105 318.

15 NOV, BROADMEADOWS, VIC
7th Annual Heart Kids Car & Bike Show, Penola Catholic College, 29 Gibson Street. Contact Adam 0437 233 477 or Luisa 0409 383 354.

15 NOV, KURWONGBAH, QLD
All American Thanksgiving Day, Lakeside Park. Contact 1800 722 377.

15 NOV, LUDDENHAM, NSW
Rodstock Car Show & Swap Meet, Luddenham Showgrounds. Contact Red 0402 163 044.

15 NOV, WILLIAMSTOWN, VIC
Aces By The Bay Show 'n' Shine Family Day, Seaworks Maritime Precinct. Contact Dave 0474 828 588.

20-22 NOV, NARROGIN, WA
Narrogin RevHeads 2015, Narrogin Town Centre. Contact Patrick 0437 898 325 or Stew 0439 098 492.

22 NOV, CULCAIRN, NSW
Culcairn Show 'n' Shine & Swap Meet, Culcairn Football Ground. Contact Brendan 0438 298 717.

22 NOV, MEREDITH, VIC
Meredith Car Show & Family Day, Meredith Football Grounds. Contact Leon 0407 871 151.

27-28 NOV, ADELAIDE, SA
Adelaide Auto Expo, Adelaide Showgrounds. Contact Geoff 0410 356 356.

27-29 NOV, SHEPPARTON, VIC
Shepparton Springnats, Shepparton Showgrounds. Visit www.autofest.com.au.

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LEGEND

STORY CRAIG PARKER PHOTOS PETER BATEMAN

LIFE'S A BEACH

WE CATCH UP WITH GREG 'BEACH' BALL, 25 YEARS AFTER HE FIRST APPEARED IN *STREET MACHINE*

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www.prostreet.com.au
JIM BEAM
BOURBON

01: One of Beach's recent projects is this pin-sharp rotary-powered MGA. It's pretty much finished; once it's had a brake test, she's good to go

02: Beach went to look at a Monaro for a customer and ended up buying this ute off him. After giving it a quick respray, leather SS interior and 20s, he concluded it was still too boring. Solution? Suicide doors, of course!

03: Here's Greg entertaining some friends in his legendary pink VG Valiant convertible. "I picked up heaps of sheilas at Summernats with this – we only let them get in if they were wearing pink," he remembers fondly. "I ended up selling it just after I started Pro Street in 1989"

04: Mitch Reinders's FC wagon made the cut for the 2010 Street Machine Of The Year

HIS name might be Greg Ball, but he's universally known as Beach. His business, Pro Street Restorations, is also universally known for turning out hundreds of streeters over the past 30 years – a number of which have graced the pages of *Street Machine*, as well claiming a swag of big awards. *SM* even did a feature on Beach in the Oct/Nov 1991 issue.

Oh yes, he's also a Summernats institution, having cut more laps of NATEX than most – all while proudly wearing a cap sporting two bountiful bosoms.

We thought it was high time we caught up with Beach to chew the fat.

For the benefit of our newer *SM* readers, give us the abbreviated Greg 'Beach' Ball story.

I'm a panel beater and spray painter by trade. After my apprenticeship I worked for Kevin Monk building his '32 Fords, Lincolns, etc. After that I worked for a mob doing Valiant soft-top conversions; we chopped the roofs of about 180 Valiants. My white Valiant (*SM*, Apr/May '88) won Top Convertible at Summernats 1, which was a real highlight for me. But most people know me for the pink one I built after that (*SM*, Apr/May '89) – which I sold just after starting up Pro Street Restorations on Sydney's northern beaches in 1989. I've built a heap of show winners, concours winners and a shitload of nice streeters.

I stayed at the one address for 21 years, before setting up a new shop in the Hunter Valley. It's a funny thing; I have a lot of friends now that have no idea I used to go to every show in the universe wearing a pair of tits on my head.

Like your new digs?

Love 'em. I'm out of the rat race and have a lot more room. I've got 14 customer cars and 12 of my own projects all under one roof. I don't get many tyre-kickers. You do get the odd one, but as soon as you start quoting big bucks they tend to piss off.

How has the industry changed?

Everything is big dollars these days. There's no such thing as a cheap job anymore and a lot of builds will top 150 grand. Virtually all our customer cars are bare-metal, no-nut-or-bolt-left-in-the-car rebuilds. Price doesn't seem to scare a lot of people. For example, the customer I just finished a super-nice Barracuda for is back in again with a '67 Belvedere that I'm turning into a Richard Petty NASCAR tribute. When that's finished it'll probably be the most genuine replica ever built.

So, you like doing full-house builds?

I won't touch anything these days unless the customer wants me to do it properly. I tell them straight up: "I either do it properly, or go away." We're not cheap, I'll be the first to admit that, but we only charge for the work we do and we only do the work properly.

What's your main focus at the moment?

Get five cars out in the next three months. The rotary-powered MGA has been finished for a month, it just needs to be road-driven and complete the brake test. I slashed my leg open and got a heap of stitches; now that they're out I can push the clutch in and get it done. The other cars are painted and just need assembly.

Are there any long-term projects in the works?

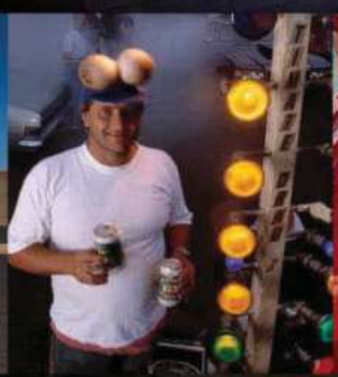
We're doing an XA coupe, a street car with a Southern Chassis Works twin A-arm front end, 600-cube injected big-block, bull-nose Top Loader and 20x12s with 385-wide tyres. Boy, you can get some rubber under them things when you widen the wheelarches!

Then there's the genuine HK GTS 327 Monaro. It's a massive project that was absolutely rooted: doors wouldn't open because the pillars were so badly rusted; the boot hinges were rusted to the point the boot lid fell off; there was no parcel tray; and the floor was so far gone the seat fell through trailering it here. We had to do rust repairs before sending it to the blaster – if we hadn't we wouldn't have got anything back.

Why didn't you ever resurrect the convertible F100 you crashed on its maiden voyage?

I bent the chassis, tore the four-link mounts out, bent the cab – I was over it. The big-block and driveline was still good and went into an XC wagon; we used the 15x15 Sunraysias for pot plants and tossed the rest.

03



I HAVE A LOT OF FRIENDS NOW THAT HAVE NO IDEA I USED TO GO TO EVERY SHOW IN THE UNIVERSE WEARING A PAIR OF TITS ON MY HEAD

04

This '67 Belvedere is destined to be a replica of Richard Petty's NASCAR – complete with stripped interior, 'cage, race dash and a full-house 426 Hemi!

I TELL CUSTOMERS STRAIGHT UP: 'I EITHER DO IT PROPERLY, OR GO AWAY'

How many cars have you had in *Street Machine?*

Everyone remembers the pink convertible but actually the white convertible with a blue stripe was first. The pink one was way more fun, because with the white one we spent all our time cleaning and polishing it for the show 'n' shine. We just sank piss and cruised the pink one for four days.

Other cars include a Capri (NOV6), which was the very first car we did at Pro Street 26 years ago, and Mitch Reinders's FC wagon and yellow '36 chopped truck (TOW454). There was the blue HJ sedan (PRO HJ), and I did the graphics on a few cars including the green HQ (*SM*, Jul/Aug '92) and an HQ Monaro (REVHED).

You've recently been to the US; any highlights?

We did the *Hot Rod* Power Tour. Started out in a Rambler I bought over there, but ditched it in Memphis because of relentless fuel problems and ended up finishing off the last 1500 miles in a little Golf hire car. I also drove Kevin Monk's old RHD Daytona up in Detroit. John Pappas owns it now – he also owns a yellow Superbird and a Sox & Martin Superbird.

At the Petty Museum, in Charlotte, they let me measure everything on Petty's genuine NASCAR for the tribute machine I'm building. I took 171 photos and they pretty much let me do whatever the heck I liked.

Very friendly, eh?

Everybody was as nice as shit to me over there. They just let me walk around their shop and do whatever. Don Garlits gave me a personal tour through his museum and private garage. I went to Schumacher Racing, which was great. Normally you can't do that, but I had a guy who knew a guy that got me in. Charlotte Speedway, the NASCAR Hall of Fame and Hendrick Motorsports were awesome. What a great place to visit!

The guys who ran the GM Motor Medic on the Power Tour also invited me up to Detroit for a tour of GM's proving ground. It's mental; it makes Lang Lang look like a kid's car park! Three hours and I only saw about half of it.

When I got home I sent them all Pro Street T-shirts for being so helpful. I sent about 40 all up, to the all the boys at Trepanier's, all the guys from Car Shop Inc in Moline, Illinois, and everybody else who helped me out and did the right thing by me.

Seems like you went everywhere!

That's only half of it. Three days of Nitro at Bristol, and then Floyd Garrett's Muscle Car Museum in Sevierville, Tennessee. Doesn't look like much, but you walk in and f**k me! There are Yenko Camaros, a *Vanishing Point* Challenger, Hemi cars, L88 Corvettes – hundreds of killer cars.

What cars push your buttons?

That white '68 Mustang – 'The Boss' – by Kindig-it Design. Saw it on the Power Tour, it was real nice. However there aren't many guys I rate these days; I pick the shit out of everything. Last year I was at Ringbrothers with these Yanks that were dribbling over that Chevelle they were building. I said to these Yanks: 'Look at the f**king welds, are you kidding me?' They'd made up these billet floor panels with countersunk bolts, not one of them fitted!

Are you going to get 'round to building that pro street Rolls-Royce you talked about in the Oct/Nov '91 *SM* feature?

It's been done! That silver one in the States with the blown Hemi. It's awesome, I've seen it live. Other than the colour, the rest of it is exactly how I would have done it – blown, injected Hemi, all-leather interior. Mental!

If cost, time and resources were no object, what car would you build?

A genuine, restored 1971 Hemi Cuda convertible. I already have a '71 Cuda convertible and it's one of my all-time favourite cars. Hemi Cuda convertibles are a bit hard to come by. They only made 11 of 'em and I'd love to have one in my collection.

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SNAP SHOTS

STORY SIMON MAJOR

1

1

3

2

4

4

DAVID RAWNSLEY

> ALICE SPRINGS, NT

DAVID Rawnsley is a car guy to the core, and likes to dabble in all areas of the hobby. Whether it be a factory-style restoration, full-on race car or tough streeter, he will try his hand at all aspects of the build process and has a variety of project cars to his credit. Hailing from Alice Springs, David has a reputation as the 'Val guy' of the Red Centre, but his interests range far beyond the five points of the Pentastar.

01: DAVID'S stepfather Graeme came into his life when he was nine years old. "From that point on we became a motorsport family," David says. "Without his influence my life would not have taken the automotive path. He owned a genuine Monte Carlo BMC works Mini Cooper and raced this crossflow 1310cc Clubman in the Nubrik Mini racing series. He would take us to Sandown, Winton and Calder, which is where I was bitten hard by the racing bug."

02: AT 17, David was ready for his own set of wheels and chose a 180B SSS coupe as his first car. "Graeme asked me: 'What do you want in a car?' I said: 'Two doors, lots of carbies and lots of gears.' That ruled out a three-speed Charger, but we managed to turn the Datsun into a bit of a goer with a 2.1L stroker engine, twin 45mm Webers, 240K five-speed and 240K diff. It even had Volvo rear discs and ran a flat 13-second pass at Calder in 1988."

03: THE Datsun made way for an HZ panel van in 1990, which was originally bought as a tow car for David's off-road buggy. A change in plans saw David move from Melbourne to Innisfail in Far North Queensland, so the van was decked out to help with the relocation. Marriage and other priorities put a brake on the car hobby for the next few years, however he did manage to piece together an early-70s Toyota Crown with a 186 and Trimatic. "I repainted it metallic green and added a gold pinstripe with gold Hotwires. It looked pretty neat and was my first attempt at spraying a car."

04: WHEN David was around 12 he saw his first Cobra. "I made a promise that I would have one someday," he remembers. "That desire was really burning hot 20 years later, and became a reality when we moved to Alice Springs in 2002. Within 18 months I'd saved for a kit, then spent the next five years piecing it together. It runs a 5.7 LS1 and T56 trans, and once it was registered in 2010 it was driven to Innisfail in FNQ for its 'shakedown' run! The car still wears tinted primer to give it a worn-out race-car look. I keep threatening to make it shiny, but I just love it too much as it is."

05: IN 2008 David decided it was time to build a car for his wife, Ronda. She likes Ford hardtops and Chargers, but with skyrocketing prices for 70s Falcon coupes, she decided a Charger was the go. "A mate told me of one that had been dumped out bush, so I grabbed it," David says. "But I found it was very rusty in the floor and rails due to sitting in desert sand. I found a guy building a Charger as a speedway car, but the project had stalled, so I bought it and a V8 VK Valiant sedan for parts. The speedway car had

a rusty plenum and poorly removed roof, but between both Chargers I had enough parts to make a rust-free shell. The plan is to finish it in Focus Burnt Orange, with an NZ Regal front and a stroker 440."

06: RONDA'S uncle, George, passed away in 2008 and left his VH Valiant ex-hearse to David. "I originally intended to use it as a donor for the Charger, but after getting it home and cleaning it up I sort of fell in love with it," he laughs. The VK V8 was dismantled and the wagon, now christened 'George', received the V8 driveline. "I was asked if George could be used in a movie, so he makes a guest appearance in *Tracks*."

07: RONDA'S first car was a 1967 Toyota 'shovelnose' Corona. "I decided to build another to enjoy while the Charger is on the go," David says. "My knowledge of these little beauties was zero, but the guys and girls on a Facebook group called Shovelnose Corona Restorers & Modifiers have taught me plenty. Our goal was the Red CentreNATS held recently in Alice Springs, and in two weeks Dez Willis and I turned the car from a bare metal shell into a repaired, painted and buffed little looker with a lace roof. It was another two-week thrash to reassemble it, and I can happily say I welded the stainless tip on the exhaust at 10am of scrutineering day."

08: DAVID'S work life sends him to remote places in central Australia and as a result he has stumbled on many abandoned wrecks – check out his excellent Facebook page, Alice Springs Bush Wrecks. "I've spotted everything from Monaros and Sandmans through to GS Falcons," he says. "I have always had a soft spot for both Valiant coupes and Pacers, so when I found this lonely VG Pacer hardtop I just had to have it. It now sits in my yard as I slowly collect parts for its rebuild. It's not a free-for-all; these cars still have an owner so you need to purchase them legally through the proper community channels."

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FANGING FLICK

STORY SIMON MAJOR

HOOPER 1978

> THE GREATEST STUNTMAN ALIVE

BREAKDOWN

VEHICLES: 1978 Pontiac Trans Am, 1977 GMC K1500, 1973 Ford Torino, 1971 Ford Torino wagon, 1969 Ford Mustang Mach 1, 1970 Ford Maverick, 1971 Ford LTD, 1968 BMW 2002, 1961 Cadillac ambulance, 1972 Chevrolet El Camino, 1976 Suzuki RM250, 1978 Subaru Brat

STARS: Burt Reynolds, Jan-Michael Vincent, Sally Field, Brian Keith, James Best, Adam West, Robert Klein

DIRECTOR: Hal Needham

ACTION: A film about stuntmen is a great excuse for action – all kinds of awesome stunts are jammed into this flick

PLOT: Ageing stuntman Sonny Hooper is at the top of his game but feeling the pinch of both a worn-out body and young talent looking to swipe his crown

HOOPER (Burt Reynolds) is a leading Hollywood stuntman struggling with the physical demands of his profession, but looking to make one final wad of cash to fund his retirement before passing the baton to young gun, Ski (Vincent).

The two rivals form an unlikely partnership, combining Hooper's experience with Ski's fearlessness to plan a stunt that will cement the pair as legends in their field.

When cut-throat director Roger Deal (Klein) gets wind of the plan he proposes a 325-foot canyon leap using a jet-powered Trans Am – a stunt so dangerous the odds are stacked against the pair even landing the jump, let alone surviving it.

Threaded through the macho action and goofy one-liners is a fairly heavy undertone as Hooper ponders his own mortality and how his actions will affect his fiancée Gwen (Field) and mentor Jocko (Keith).

Burt Reynolds and director Hal Needham were seemingly at the top of their game in the late 70s following the success of their first collaboration, *Smokey And The Bandit*. *Hooper* was the second flick of a six-movie Reynolds-Needham partnership that included *Smokey* I and II, the *Cannonball Run* franchise and *Stroker Ace*. Sadly, the latter films flopped, virtually destroying Reynolds's superstar status, but to be honest the writing was on the wall early on with *Hooper*.

Look, it's not a total drag, but there were plenty of simple changes that could have been made to tighten the script and remove some of the painful elements from what should have been an all-time hero flick. The bar fight scene is embarrassing and Reynolds's stupid giggle will have you searching for the mute button, and you have to wonder whether there was actually a proper script – the actors sound like they're just freeballing their lines.

But *Hooper* is a film about stuntmen, and at least they nailed that part. Both Reynolds and Needham started their careers as stuntmen and the action-movie satire of *Hooper* offered the perfect platform for them to include stunts of every kind – which they did, and they're awesome.

VERDICT: 2/5

HOOPER is best viewed as a chance to reminisce about the golden age of Hollywood stunts performed at their raw best. The closing scenes are total mayhem, but somehow they work, while the supporting cast – Brian Keith (*Hardcastle & McCormick*), James Best (Sheriff Roscoe from *The Dukes Of Hazzard*) and Adam '*Batman*' West – are all TV legends to any late baby boomer or Gen-Xer.

COOL FLICK FACT: The 'Trans Am' used for the finale was a retired jet-powered drag car that was sacrificed for the canyon leap.

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I DRIVE, I VOTE

NOVEMBER 2015: BEHIND THE NEWS

STORY GEOFF SEDDON

NSW street machiners can now benefit from a discount registration scheme that will allow them to drive their cars for up to 60 days per year. You'll still need a pink slip, however, and you'll have to ditch your existing plates

STREET MACHINE REGO WIN

> NEW SOUTH WALES INTRODUCES CONCESSIONAL REGISTRATION FOR MODIFIED CARS

WHEN the Australian National Street Machine Association began the push nearly three years ago for a conditional registration scheme for modified cars in NSW, I gave them two chances. It was a great idea, but when has that had anything to do with government policy? The answer is quite a bit lately, at least in NSW, with the announcement of a new 60-day logbook scheme for legally modified cars.

The existing NSW conditional scheme was negotiated some years ago by the historic clubs to allow their members to attend club events and conduct maintenance runs without paying full rego on cars that were used infrequently. Any other use has to be approved and recorded in the club's day book by the registrar. Eligibility regulations were left ambiguous to account for period accessories and things like vintage Holden-powered Land Rovers, but given that most historic clubs exist to preserve a certain marque or era, the clear intention has always been that the vehicles be essentially stock.

At the other end of the spectrum, NSW hot rodders have their own conditional street rod registration scheme, which is strictly limited to pre-1948 cars. The street machine community was caught in the middle, unwanted by either group and forced to pay full freight on rego despite (in most cases) our steeds being used no more often than other hobby cars.

At a well-attended public meeting at Toronto, NSW in early 2013, ANSMA proposed a concessional scheme to specifically cover legally modified post-'48 cars that were also in limited use. The meeting also expressed a strong preference for a logbook scheme similar to that in Victoria, and for the retention of existing number plates. Alas, that last one isn't gonna happen anytime soon, but two out of three ain't bad.

The new scheme, announced by NSW Minister for Roads Duncan Gay on 3 September, was scheduled to come into effect on 1 October as a

two-year trial. Details were still being finalised as we went to press, but here's the gist of it:

• The existing NSW historic H-plate system remains in place and is unaffected by the new logbook scheme. Clubs can decide which of the two systems suits them best, or run both if they choose.

• The conditional street rod registration scheme is also unaffected.

• Vehicles must be at least 30 years old. Modern replicas of old cars are not eligible, nor are vehicles over 3.5 tonnes. There is no 1948 cut-off.

• The scheme is open to legally modified cars and motorcycles. If it is eligible for full registration, it is eligible under this scheme, and so includes engineered cars; the rules are exactly the same. An annual pink slip is required to keep us honest.

• The scheme is also open to unmodified cars.

• Existing H-plate vehicles can switch across and modified ones will be encouraged to do so. New registrations will require blue and pink slips as per full registrations.

• Owners must be members of a motoring club recognised by NSW Roads & Maritime Services. These clubs will be responsible for issuing logbooks and monitoring compliance of their use.

• Use is restricted to 60 days per year, which includes maintenance and club runs. There are no extensions as under the Victorian 45-day scheme. Every use must be recorded beforehand in the logbook that must be carried in the vehicle, which will display conditional number plates similar to the current H-plates.

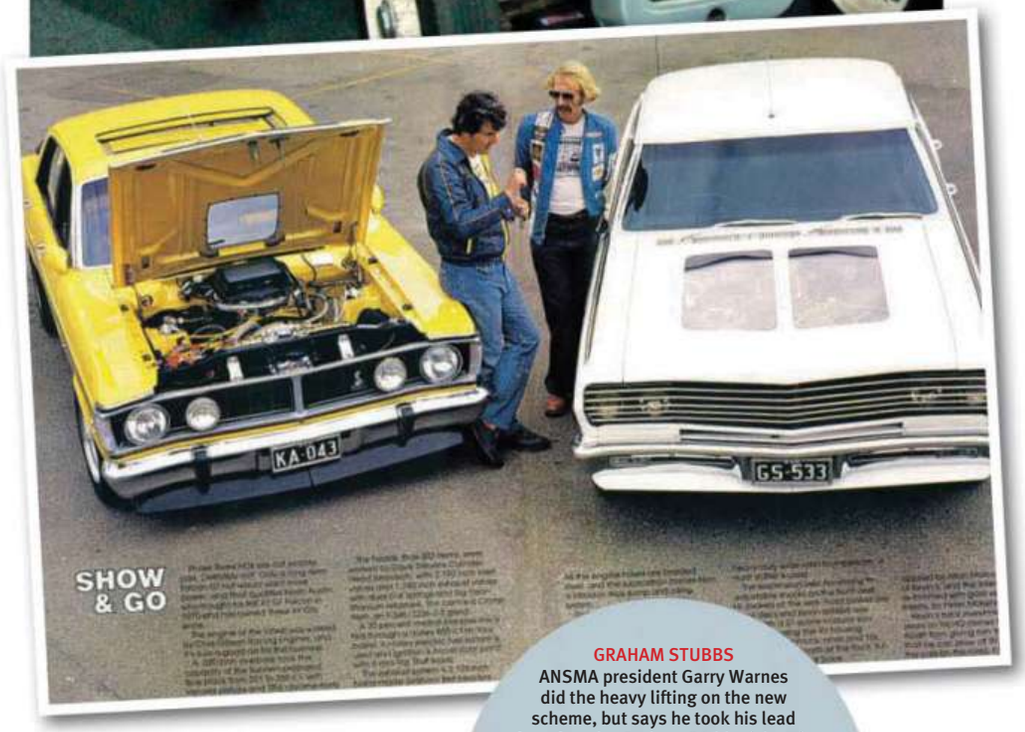
• Commercial use, including weddings, is specifically excluded.

• Cost is to be confirmed but will reflect the limited number of days the vehicle can be used, so hopefully as low as one-sixth of full registration. Ditto compulsory third party insurance, which will ultimately be determined by the claims experience. It is unlikely to be as low as H-plate cars – currently $51pa all up, including CTP insurance – which have much more restricted use, but will otherwise be a small fraction of the cost of full rego.

• Cars on historic or street rod rego can transfer across from 1 October. Those with cars currently on full rego need to wait until their rego runs out – you can't cash in the remainder. Unregistered cars have to wait 100 days from the start of the scheme on 1 October.

• There is no hidden agenda to push modified cars onto conditional registration. The government will happily take full freight from those who use their cars more often or simply prefer full rego.

In announcing the new logbook scheme, Duncan Gay is hoping it will lead to more old cars on the roads. "I encourage you to register with a club for the trial if you have a little beauty tucked away in your garage," he says, "so you



GRAHAM STUBBS

ANSMA president Garry Warnes did the heavy lifting on the new scheme, but says he took his lead from founder Graham Stubbs (above). "Graham was agitating for a scheme like this since the 1970s," Garry says. "And the ACMC has finally brought it to fruition. He was a pioneering street machiner in the real sense and his advocacy for the lifestyle continued unabated until his death in April 2013. His contribution cannot be underestimated and continues to this day with the introduction of the 60-day logbook scheme."

TOP: Garry Warnes is the current president of the Australian National Street Machine Association

ABOVE: The late Graham Stubbs (at right) with his legendary Chevelle, Malibu Magic. Graham was the founder of ANSMA, and Malibu Magic, which was built in 1979 and continuously refined throughout the 80s, won more than 400 awards between '79 and '93

RIGHT: Duncan Gay, NSW Minister for Roads, Maritime and Freight, at the 2013 Australian Confederation of Motor Clubs conference at Sydney Motorsport Park

I DRIVE, I VOTE

ABOVE RIGHT: Tony O'Donnell is president of the Australian Confederation of Motor Clubs, the group that did the heavy lifting in getting the 60-day system across the line. Countless hours of volunteer time went into making it happen

can bring her out into the sunshine and enjoy the freedom of the road more often.

"The current Conditional Historic Registration Scheme remains unchanged as an option for enthusiasts, but this government recognised that owners of conditionally registered vehicles had limited use which was just restricting these mechanical pieces of art.

"We've incorporated safe, sensible additions in consultation with the community and stakeholders so owners and the wider community can revel in these vehicles' unique beauty more often."

If you guessed the minister was a car guy, you'd be right. He acknowledges the importance of the aftermarket industry and knows first-hand the contribution that motoring enthusiasts bring to their communities, even if it's just the joy of seeing a cool old car cruising down the street.

The new logbook scheme was championed by the Australian Confederation of Motor Clubs, an umbrella organisation of which ANSMA is a member but which also represents hot rodders, four-wheel drivers, restorers, classic enthusiasts and motorcyclists. Each group works in support of the others to bring the power of numbers when push comes to shove.

It is just the latest in a series of moves the minister has made in support of our enthusiast lifestyle over the past few years. The first was the establishment of the Vehicle Standards Working Group, where bureaucrats and the ACMC work together to find solutions to issues in a structured, respectful way. Successes to date include a comprehensive listing of modifications that don't require engineering approval; expanding the number and reach of approved engineering signatories; the adoption of the National Street Rod Guidelines; and the introduction of lane filtering for motorcyclists.

So credit where it is due. As far as we can work out, the new NSW scheme is the first in Australia to specifically cater for people like us. So long as we don't abuse it, it may even provide a blueprint for the other states. Here's hoping, anyway.

FOR up-to-date information, check out the Facebook page for the Australian National Street Machine Association or visit www.rms.nsw.gov.au.

LEFT: Bikes are also included in the scheme, which is a great boon for riders of cafe racers, choppers and bobbers

BELOW: Contrary to rumours, the NSW scheme doesn't apply to wildly modified cars without engineer approval, so we won't be seeing beasts like this on the streets. That said, as this month's cover car shows, almost anything is possible if you do your homework. And the temporary permit system that operated at Red CentreNATS demonstrates what can be done when governments see a benefit in playing ball

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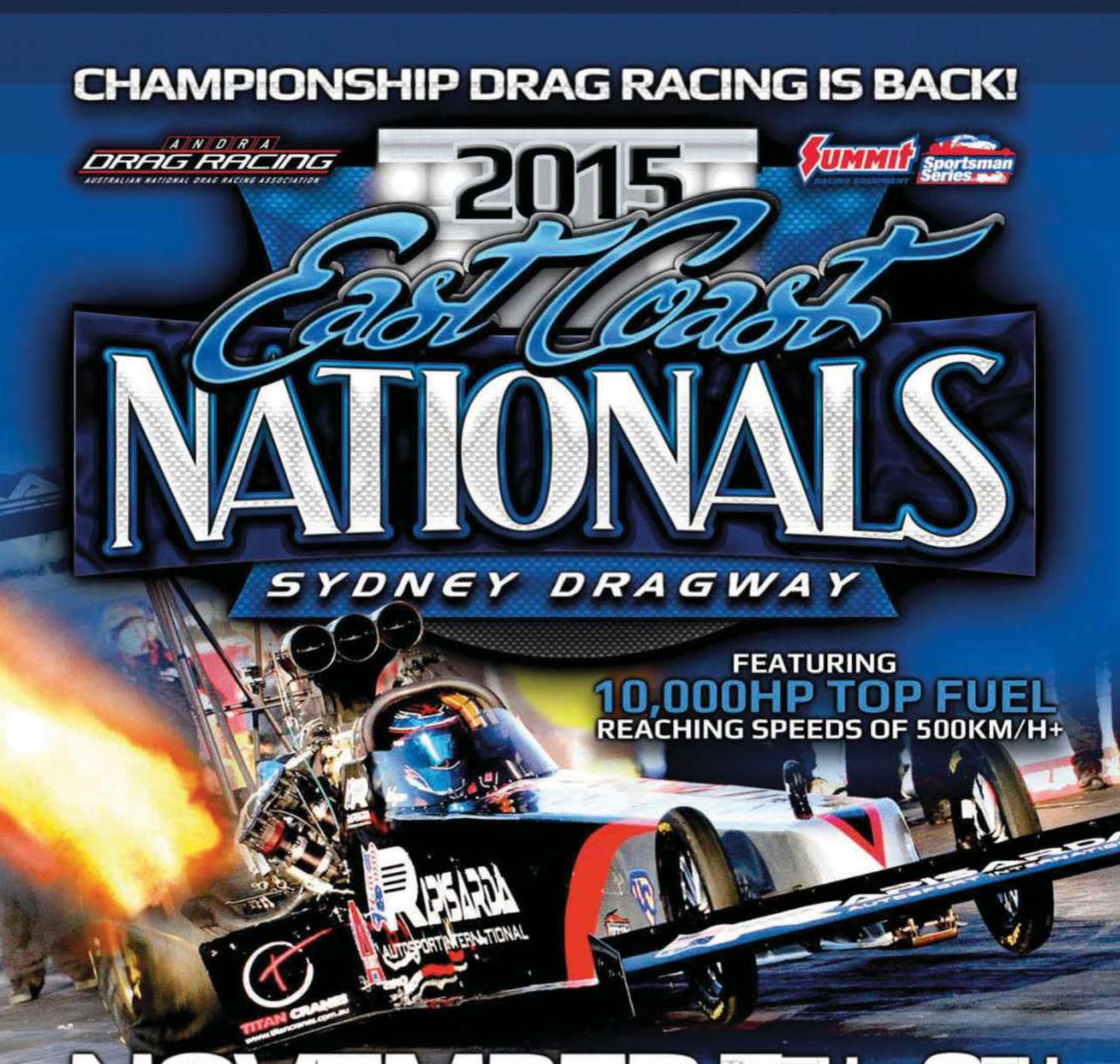

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> LETTER OF THE MONTH

NUTS IN A TWIST

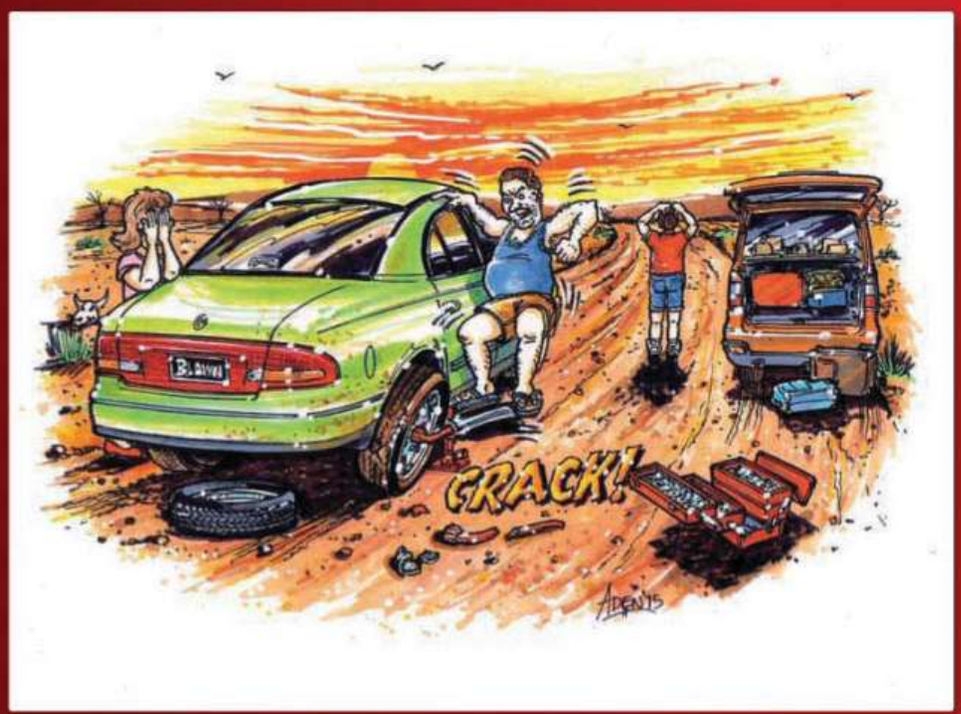
I READ about William Porker's frustrating incident concerning a 'Commode' with tight nuts (Dirty Stuff, *SM*, Sep '15). Please forgive me for being a pedantic, picky SOB, but I noticed that in the cartoon depicting the owner attempting to loosen the over-tightened wheel nuts, he was standing on the wheel brace but turning the nuts clockwise to 'loosen' them – which of course in real life would actually be tightening them.

I deserve a kick in my own nuts for pointing out something so trivial (just ask my two ex-wives), but maybe it is because I have had the same misfortune of having some mental midget over-tighten nuts while enjoying the power trip of having a lethal rattle gun in their hands!

Love the story, love *Street Machine*, love just about everybody except rattle gun rats!

Geoff Scard, email

HEY Geoff, of course you are dead right about Aden Jacobi's cartoon. Maybe he was thinking about the early Valiants, which had right-hand wheel studs on one side, and left-hand nuts on the other! – William Porker



NEW VALUES

HEY guys, I'm a massive fan of your magazine! I see a lot of big-dollar ground-up rebuilds and unique cars featured in the mag, and was just wondering what your scope is for featuring new-school cars, and what sort of level they need to be at to earn a feature. Any feedback would be great!

Steve Moore, via Facebook

HEY Steve, the only real requirement for an SM feature car is that it is interesting! Generally, our feature cars are fairly heavily modified, with the driveline, stance, paint and interior all receiving attention.

A good example of a late-model car that ticks all the boxes is Justin Ellis's KINGGM VY SS (Mar '15). There are lots of big-horsepower late-model Commodores out there, but Justin's stands out with a seriously smooth engine bay, subtle body mods, cool paint and a great stance – basically old-school techniques applied to a new-ish car.

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Hendrix, 5

BABY GOT BACK

IN REPLY to Alistair Davenport's letter (*SM*, Oct '15), I have been playing with and developing the idea of rear-mount turbos for around five years now, and they work incredibly well on a street car, as we have proven with our LJ. The turbo can be mounted anywhere there is space – for example, ours is rear of the diff – and I have seen them mounted beside and even in front of the diff (on a tonner ute). They do not have to be within the boot.

Regarding his comment of lost boot space, a large majority of modified cars run a whole variety of stuff within the boot – fuel cells, pumps, batteries, amplifiers, speakers – so I guess if you're modifying your ride that's the loss you have to take. Basically I think you need to decide whether you want a stock grocery-getter or a modified toy. If the answer is the latter, then some things you have to live with.

For the record, we use ours for everything from weekend cruises of a couple of hundred kilometres to a fish-and-chip run with my eight-year-old and wife. I even take my son to school in it and it's never been a problem.

Tony Webb, email

UTTER MADNESS

HI THERE, would it be possible to get a poster-sized picture of the red ute at Muscle Car Madness on page 96 of the April 2015 issue? It is mine and would look cool on the wall in our house. Just need to come up with a suitable story for the wife – I told her I was going to the shop for a loaf of bread!

Milton Souster, Christchurch, NZ, email

AUSTERITY MEASURES

HELLO from Greece. I'm trying to find a job in Australia with Holden, Ford or another marque's garage; do you know somebody? I love this country. Here in Greece the situation is not good; we have no money to live. I'm 34 years old and unemployed – nobody is hiring here, even as a cleaner or in supermarkets.

Bill Skourtis, email

THE RIGHT TYME

LOVED Brad and Raylea Thomson's MYTYME HX Sandman in Readers' Rockets (*SM*, Oct '15). What a great modern interpretation of the panel van genre – up-to-date wheels without being stupid big billets, a great colour, and killer stance. And enough nods to the classic van era to make it cool – such as the roof spoiler and bubble windows – but without going the whole hog with a Trans Am front or crazy murals. In fact, I thought it was probably well worth a full feature and not just two pages. Loving all the van content, bring on *Van Wheels* #12!

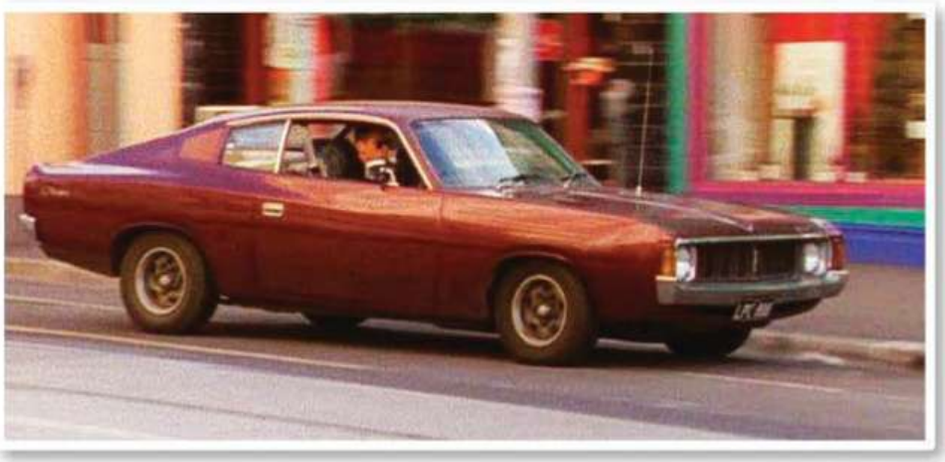
Don Dickson, email

VJ FROM BACK IN THE DAY

I'M A Holden man at heart, but even to this day I still remember the first time a Chrysler ever stirred my loins. It was a Russet Metallic VJ Charger from this fairly short-lived Aussie TV series from the late 90s called *Good Guys, Bad Guys*. I dunno if anyone out there remembers it; it was a kinda quirky crime drama, and the lead character Elvis (played by Marcus Graham) had this awesome VJ. There was just something cool about it, even though at that time Valiants were still very much an outsider thing, at least in my peer group.

There is precious little info about the car online, so I'm just curious if any of your readers remember it or know something about it. Was it a real V8, or did they just overdub a V8 soundtrack? And where is the car now?

John Crowther, email



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NSW REGO WIN

AS DETAILED by Seddo on page 26, NSW began a two-year trial of a new logbook-based registration scheme for modified cars from 1 October. It will allow those with legally modified, club-registered vehicles (post-1948 but at least 30 years old) 60 days of unrestricted use per year. It means you can take your modified car or motorbike anywhere, anytime.

Les Ings – This is great news; my wife's Sandman costs $1000 a year, and last year it only did 24km!
Brad Armstrong – Why make it a club restriction? Why not make it available to all?
Gary Collins – To keep control of the trial scheme and keep the dickhead level to a minimum. If this scheme is screwed up by totally illegal cars, stupid behaviour or stretching the rules, it won't be renewed.
Brad Armstrong – I just think it's ridiculous that all the limited rego schemes are for club use. What about the hardworking people who don't have time for clubs, who may get one Sunday a month where they want to go for a drive with their family?
Steve Smith – This would be a massive success if you were allowed to keep your number plate. With most street machines the number plate is a part of the car, part of its personality. I won't be trading in my plates for a shit-looking H-plate.
STREET MACHINE – For sure, and the Australian National Street Machine Association pushed hard on that one, but you can't win them all. We reckon there will be a massive influx to this system regardless. Have a read of the detail, it is quite different from the historic plate deal, particularly that modified cars (engineered) are allowed and you can use your 60 days whenever you want.
Alan Nicholson – For an extra $150 a year I'll keep mine on full rego. I don't understand why you'd want club rego and be told when you can drive it. It's mine and I'll drive whenever I feel like it.
STREET MACHINE – This is unrestricted, but limited to 60 days a year, and a lot more than $150 a year cheaper. Especially if you have multiple cars.
Shelle Vincent – Hopefully Victoria follows. I've said for many years we need a modified car registration like they have in the USA. Well done to NSW for listening to the people and giving it a go.
David Kolonis – Victoria already has an awesome club permit scheme. You can choose either 45 or 90 days of use on both stock and modified cars.
Nathan Beard – Hopefully no one wrecks it by being stupid and pushing the boundaries.
Ben Wilson – Mate, there's always dickheads that wreck it for everyone.
Gary Collins – That's why we are running it for two years and only through clubs. Hopefully the clubs keep the dickhead element to a minimum.
Corey Lendvai – We need this in Queensland.
Gavin Lewis – It'll never happen in Queensland. Ever. If it's not a HiLux, BT50 or a Corolla you're a hoon apparently, and they'll slap enough fines on 'em to have them crushed. The nanny state.

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CREATIVE URGE

CHRIS WILLETT'S FULL-CHASSIS, BLOWN LSX-POWERED HT HOLDEN IS BEING BUILT TO ORDER FROM RAW MATERIALS

SOME cars are constructed with bolt-on parts plucked from a catalogue, but Chris Willett's HT Holden is being built in the truest possible sense of the word. We're talking CAD-designed laser-cut chassis rails and handmade double A-arm front suspension kind of built. The body still closely resembles that of a Kingswood, but beneath the façade lurks a completely bespoke modern muscle car that upon completion will go, stop and steer like no other.

When Chris brought the HT to The Chop Shop in April 2013, it was a bit of a basket case. "I bought the car to do it up, and while that was only supposed to mean a quick freshen-up, it turned out to be so rusty that I either had to go all out or send it straight to the scrap-metal yard," he says. "The guys at The Chop Shop were keen to take on the job and I'd been to MotorEx and had a look at their work, so I knew what they were capable of."

The original design brief called for flat floors throughout, a custom firewall, tubular A-arms, a four-link rear and plenty of grunt. Under the guidance of the late, great Laurie Starling, the Chop Shop team set about transforming the HT into a high-end street machine based on the principle of function over form. Chris wanted the car to look exceptional, but it was to be a driver first and foremost.

"An HT Holden is a big, floppy car never designed to take 1000hp, so instead of attempting to make the original car handle, we decided it was best not to muck around trying to Band-Aid it," fabricator Aaron Gregory says. "We started again with a brand new chassis and underpinnings to make it handle the grunt."

The move to a full custom chassis opened up a whole realm of possibilities, but it also presented a vast array of challenges that required a great deal of forethought to overcome. "It's all well and good to go ahead and do flat floors, slam it super-low and do all the custom sheet metal, but you have to think ahead," Aaron says. "A 1000hp car needs a twin three-inch exhaust as a minimum, so before you do the crossmembers and chassis rails you have to make sure you have room for it. That's where Laurie's mind came to the fore with 10 years' experience building minitrucks. The seating and steering positions were all considered before the chassis design was determined, so that we wouldn't get to the end of the build and have nowhere to run a handbrake cable, for example. Every aspect of the design of the car was planned ahead."

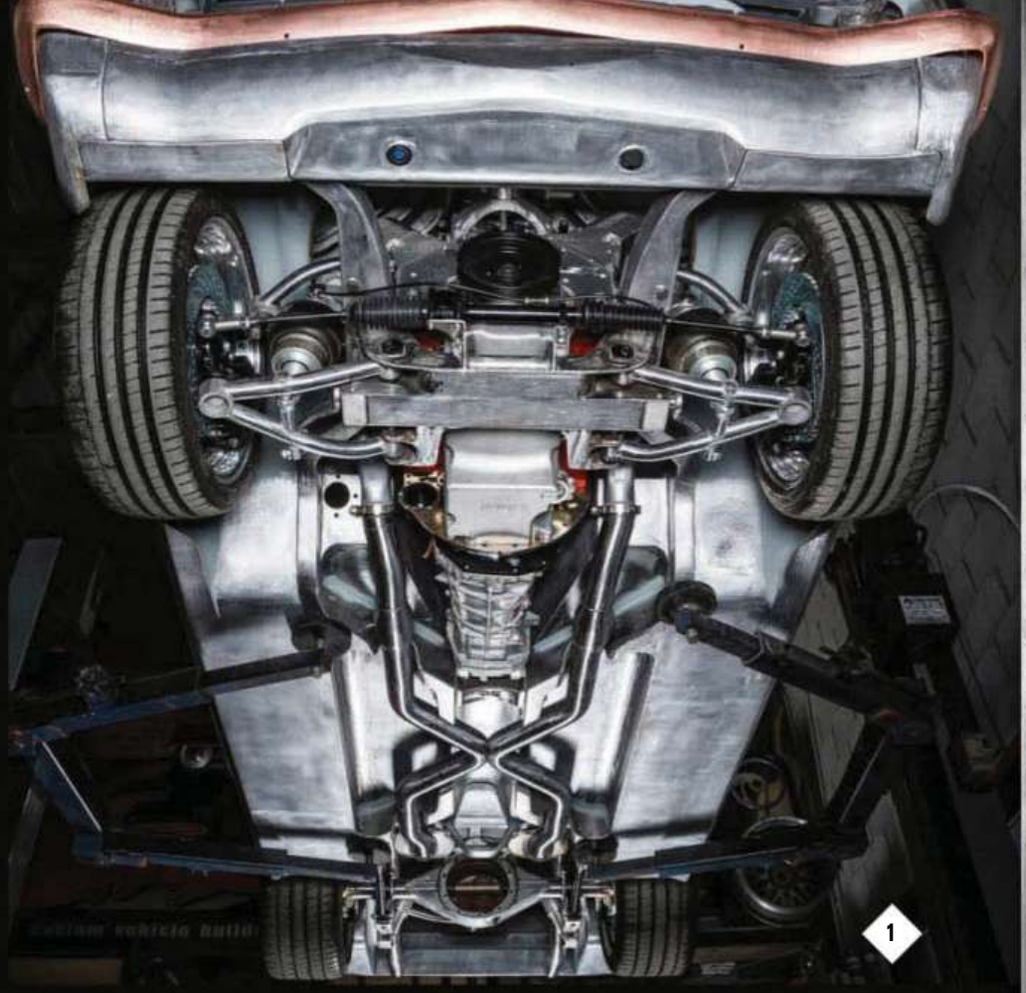
Chris was very specific about his choice of rolling stock, and that too had a pronounced effect on the overall chassis design. He liked cars with big dish on the rear, but couldn't stand the fact that they never seemed to have dished wheels on the front, too. Large-offset 20-inch fronts meant the pointy end of the chassis had to be far narrower than stock. This in turn meant that a custom engine plate was a better option than traditional-style engine mounts, with the 427ci Harrop-blown LSX slung as low and as rearward as possible for optimal weight distribution and bonnet clearance.

When the time came to build the chassis, the whole process was carried out in-house. "Laurie would design the rails in the workshop, run upstairs, knock them up in CAD, come back downstairs with a USB drive and plug it into the plasma cutter and punch them out, then we'd weld it all together," Aaron says. "Wheel diameter and width, ride height, position of the back seat, position of the four-link, mounting points for the Shockwaves, the profile of the floor and the position and design of the fuel tank were just some of the considerations involved in determining the design of the rear half of the chassis."

Likewise, the front and rear suspension systems were designed and hand-fabricated specifically for this car. The double A-arm front end was drawn up in Solidworks, which allowed the team to simulate its operation through a full range of motion and evaluate factors like bump-steer and toe-in. "The Shockwave struts we used allow low ride height but have plenty of lift for bumpy country roads, and the front crossmember features an internal sway-bar. Ryan, Fret and Laurie spent a lot of time developing that," Aaron says. "The custom billet top block is more of a showy piece, but it saved a lot of labour time fabricating it."

A number of important factors had to be considered in the design of the rear suspension too, specifically the size of the rolling stock, the amount of power on offer from the blown and stroked LS, and Chris's

THE MOVE TO A FULL CUSTOM CHASSIS OPENED UP A REALM OF POSSIBILITIES, BUT ALSO PRESENTED CHALLENGES



EXTERIOR

1: The underside of the car has no swage lines, dimples or other aesthetic trickery because it's designed as a driver rather than a trophy-hunter. Chassis and suspension design was Laurie Starling's forte, and from the custom double A-arm front to the Watt's link in the rear and everything in between, he knocked this one out of the park. Notably, Chris made the decision to change his own gears, opting for a T56 Magnum six-speed and McLeod RXT clutch

2: There's not much to see in here just yet, but the cockpit layout, seating positions and ergonomics were critical considerations during the initial chassis design phase of the project. The rear seat base is in the same position as factory, yet it is now a stressed member that also forms part of the tailshaft loop, four-link pick-up point and main structural suspension point

3: The HT is so low and the wheels so big that with the suspension aired out the standard bonnet hinges fouled on the front tyres and wouldn't allow the bonnet to close! "A lot of time was spent with cardboard and sheet-metal templates figuring out how to make the hinge come in and out of a 50x50mm hole in the firewall," Aaron says. The hinge is gapped 5mm the whole way around right throughout its motion, and the pivot under the dash can be adjusted from front to back and side to side

BODY HIGHLIGHTS

- Replacement sills wrap around underneath to the chassis rails
- Lower door gap continues through to the front wheelarch
- Bottom of lower rear door radiused
- Step in C-pillar flattened out
- Front corner markers removed
- Hump in the front valance removed
- Hump in B-pillar removed and door frames extended
- Air intake added to grille
- Snug-fitted bumpers
- Shaved drip rails, raised peak added to body
- Fuel filler relocated to beaver panel
- Boot opening moved to top of tail-lights

1

2

ENGINE BAY

- Harrop 2300 supercharger
- Ringbrothers billet rocker covers
- Custom billet upper shock and A-arm mount
- Custom A-arms
- Ridetech Shockwave airbag struts
- Water-jet-cut alloy engine plate
- Rear-driven MSD alternator
- Fabricated, hand-swaged over-the-radiator air intake
- 800hp 427ci LSX
- Custom flat firewall with alternator recess
- Front tubs with outer guard inserts
- Custom bonnet hinges
- Fabricated, hand-swaged air dam and radiator shroud
- Handmade 1⅞in headers

1: The Russo-built, supercharged 427ci LSX is the perfect combination for the car's intended use. "I wanted a nice, driveable combo with a choppy idle, and a power figure of around 700-800hp," Chris says. Thanks to some lateral thinking, the engine is devoid of all crank-driven accessories, with the obvious exception of the Harrop 2300 Black Series blower!

2: The VE Commodore V8 radiator is reliable and effective and the matching factory thermo fans could suck a golf ball down a garden hose, but it's not the most aesthetically pleasing of set-ups and didn't leave much real estate for an over-the-radiator-style air intake. So Aaron dropped the top of the grille down to create a letterbox opening, then fabbed up an air dam to direct air into the custom-made intake, fashioned in the same style as the hand-swaged radiator and fan shroud. Serviceability was a big priority, so the whole show unbolts and lifts out as a single piece. "Chris is a big fan of aviation-type styling, so we've used plenty of exposed aluminium bolts with tapered washers," Aaron says

decision to retain a full-size back seat. “That meant no massive IRS set-up or drag-style rear end; we had to go with a smaller four-link, which was designed to be adjustable so the car can be set up when it hits the road,” Aaron says. “We had to go to a Watt’s link to keep the diff central through 280mm of travel, all the while keeping huge wheels centred in the wheelarches.”

Knowing how low the car was going to ride and that the quality of the roads around Chris’s hometown of Corowa left a little to be desired, flat sheet-metal floors were built with all the plumbing and wiring run through the sills, so that nothing under the car was exposed to potential damage. The quality of engineering involved in the chassis and suspension is otherworldly, but one thing you won’t see in the undercarriage is a lot of is intricate swage lines and other decorative work. “The car is built to be a real driver, and if it happens to do well on the show scene when it’s finished, that’s secondary, really,” Chris says.

Once the engine was slotted in without any accessories, the team was taken aback by how impressive it looked in its bare state. “We stood around looking at it and Laurie said: ‘How good would it be not to have to bolt all that ugly shit to the front of the motor?’” Aaron says. “That comment kind of snowballed, and we tried to figure out a way to keep the motor looking nice and clean.” The boys resolved to rid the engine of all bolt-on accessories, resulting in the fitment of a remote electric water pump, electric power-assisted steering from a Holden Barina, and an electric air-conditioning compressor.

The only accessory that proved challenging was the alternator; the team was reluctant to run it off the tailshaft and lose voltage whenever the car was stationary. “That’s when we thought we’d take advantage of Harrop’s rear-belt-driven centre-shaft supercharger and drive the alternator off the rear of the blower,” Aaron says. “It kept it off the front of the motor and meant we could show off how far back and low we could sit the motor in the car.”

Around the time the suspension and chassis work on the HT was being finalised, Chop Shop frontman Laurie Starling lost his life. Needless to say, this had a profoundly tragic effect on everyone involved with the build. “The Chop Shop team continued on the HT for three months before deciding to close that chapter in our lives, and the car was put into storage,” Aaron says. “Chris stuck by us, and after three months of soul-searching, Chubby at Lowe Fabrications gave me the opportunity and the space to get back into it. Memphis Hell Custom Vehicle Builders was born, and the car was brought back out of storage.”

The engine bay was Aaron’s first foray on his own with the car, and Chris let him get creative with the tinwork. “I’d send drawings to make sure he was happy with what I had planned, and it was a pretty straightforward process because we have similar taste,” Aaron says. With all the stock HT Holden structure gone, Aaron had to find strength in other places. Tubes from the firewall pick up the guard mounting flanges, running forward to the radiator support and wrapping down to the top of the chassis rails, adding rigidity. They are also the tracts through which the front wiring and plumbing will run.

The front wheel tubs might seem large, but they’re actually as small as possible given the size of the wheels and the range of suspension travel and steering lock on offer. The windows in the wheel tubs were painstakingly constructed from a cut and sectioned wheelarch outer, which actually came off the original front guards that were factory-

THE BODY STILL CLOSELY RESEMBLES THAT OF A KINGSWOOD, BUT BENEATH THE FAÇADE LURKS A COMPLETELY BESPOKE MODERN MUSCLE CAR

CHRIS WAS SPEECHLESS WHEN HE SAW THE CAR. THAT WAS AMAZING, AS AT THE END OF THE DAY I'M BUILDING IT FOR HIM

fitted to the car. "They show off the suspension hardware and give us a bunch more clearance around the headers, so it shouldn't burn the paint when they get hot."

Plenty of subtle body mods have been carried out too, but Chris was adamant that he wanted to keep it looking like an HT, so there's nothing that upsets the factory lines. The drip rails were shaved, but peaks were added in their place to retain some character, keep water out of the window rubbers and stop the car whistling down the freeway. Factory oversights such as the hump in the B-pillar were taken care of, and the door frames extended to suit. Chris wanted to stick with factory-style push-button door handles, but with the tubs extending well into the rear doors, that presented something of a challenge. "The door handle had to remain in the factory position, yet the door latch had lifted 100mm," Aaron says. "It required a triple-pivot bellcrank set-up within the door to transfer the motion from the handle to the latch."

With the fuel filler shaved off the rear quarter panel, it had to be placed somewhere else. Chris liked the idea of it being central in the rear of the car, but didn't want to have to open the boot to fill the tank. "We had to move the boot shut line from below the tail-lights to the top of them," Aaron explains. "This required fabbing a new beaver panel from scratch, and cutting and shutting the boot while retaining drip channels and a place for the boot rubber to go, in order to keep the boot sealed and maintain factory aesthetics."

With the deadline of MotorEx 2016 looming large on the horizon, the car is constantly progressing. "It's really evolved since it's been at Aaron's new shop; especially the engine bay," Chris says. "He's finishing off all the finer details and ticking things off the list; he's absolutely killing it. When I saw the car all set up at MotorEx this year I was blown away by his metal work. It had been a while since I'd seen the car, and the photos just hadn't done it justice. To see it all together and back on four wheels for the first time was mind-blowing. Hopefully next year she'll be ready to roll!"

The car created a real stir at MotorEx, but it was a trying week for Aaron. "It was the toughest, most emotional week I've had since Laurie's passing," he says. "The last time I'd been put through the wringer pulling all-nighters on a car was the MotorEx prior, and the one person you could count on to keep you awake and be there clowning around was Laurie. The set-up day for MotorEx was the 12-month anniversary of his passing, and that's when it really hit home that he wasn't there to see the car. It was such a rollercoaster; it was awesome that I'd managed to get the car there looking so rad, because that's what it's all about. When Chris saw the car he was speechless, and that was amazing because at the end of the day I'm building the car for him.

"The feedback from MotorEx was awesome, and there was a constant crowd five deep around it all weekend. It stood out among fully finished cars with three times the money spent on them, and for me that was proof of just how bad-arse this car really is."

CHRIS WILLETT
1970 HOLDEN HT KINGSWOOD

ENGINE
Brand: 427ci LSX
Throttlebody: Fly-by-wire
Supercharger: Harrop 2300 Black Series
Inlet manifold: Harrop
Heads: Trickflow Gen X 255
Camshaft: Russo Performance
Conrods: Callies
Pistons: CP Bullet Series
Crank: Callies
Oil pump: Melling
Cooling: VE SS radiator and thermo fans
Exhaust: Custom 1⅞in headers, twin 3in exhaust, Magnaflow mufflers

TRANSMISSION
Gearbox: Tremec T56 Magnum
Clutch: McLeod RXT
Diff: Sheet-metal 9in

SUSPENSION & BRAKES
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Brakes: Baer 14in discs, six-piston calipers (f & r)
Master cylinder: Tilton pedal assembly

WHEELS & TYRES
Rims: Intro Hammer 5; 20x8in (f), 20x11 (r)
Rubber: Michelin Super Sport; 245/35/20 (f), 305/35/20 (r)

THANKS
Aaron at Memphis Hell Custom Vehicle Builders; Laurie, Aaron, Ryan, Muz and Fret from The Chop Shop; Chubby at Lowe Fabrications; Ryan at United Speed Shop; Russo Performance; Julian at Harrop; Troy at Fink Engineering; Scotty at Oxytech; Pete at Mallaby Sheetmetal; Stephen Gregory

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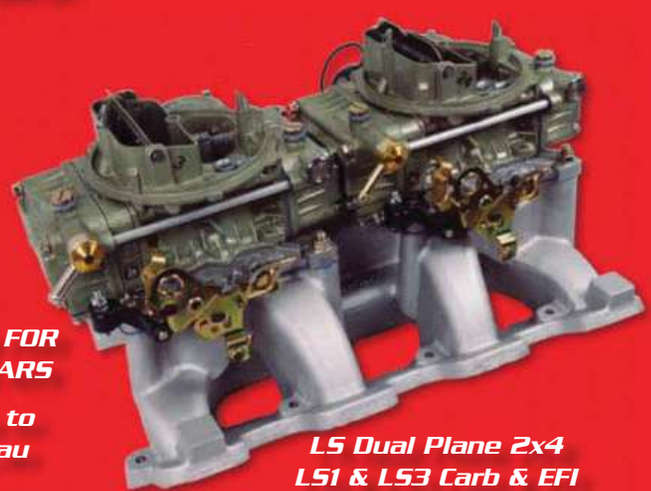

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STORY GLENN TORRENS PHOTOS SIMON DAVIDSON

MORE THAN A DECADE AFTER DEBUTING HIS FIRST SHOW-QUALITY MUSTANG, MICHAEL SANDE IS AT THE REINS OF ANOTHER SENSATIONAL PONY CAR

BACK IN THE SADDLE

GEDYUP

FRONT: The grille is a billet-style unit sourced from the USA. For a cleaner and more focused appearance, the Mustang's standard indicators have been deleted from the front valance, as have the strakes just inboard of the headlights. Parking lights and indicators are now contained within the new Rocket Industries-sourced headlights

ENGINE BAY: The Heidts front crossmember transplant means the Mustang's spring towers were no longer required, so the sides of the engine bay have been remodelled. There is now a stack of space around the injected 383ci Windsor stroker with EMS-managed eight-throttle injection. There's plenty of other detail work, too, including a pair of rails that hide the front guards' retaining bolts

MANY street machiners will relate to the idea of picking up a spanner, grinder or welder as something to look forward to once the day's work is done. Sydney's Michael Sande certainly does: "Some people look at building a car as hard work, but for me it's terrific free time," he says. "You get out there into the shed, put some music on and get into the groove."

A house builder during the day, Michael has lately spent his post-work hours building this splendid Mustang. It's actually his second high-calibre 'Stang build. "I had a purple '65 coupe, mini-tubbed with polished Simmons rims," he says. "That was more than 10 years ago. I had it at Summernats; it won 2nd Top Coupe, and a couple of other trophies elsewhere."

Michael would probably have been happy to keep showing the car and gradually let it loose on the streets, but someone else had other ideas. "There was bloke who wanted to buy it; he kept hounding me!" Michael explains. "He was: 'I want your car! I want your car!' I told him it wasn't for sale, as I didn't want to sell it. But in the end I thought: 'The money would be nice for my house; I can get another car later,' because I was building a house for myself at the time."

Two years later, with his house completed, Michael was ready to build another Mustang. "I found one online in the States," he says. "I had a shipping company bring it in; I simply collected it from a holding yard and took it home. It was a standard survivor car, turquoise with a 289. It was in fair condition – I could have got it registered – and originally, I thought I might restore it. Then I thought: 'Nah, I'll build it the way I want.'"

After discussing Michael's plans, Mick at Old Skool Smash & Restoration in Smithfield, NSW began the Mustang's metal mods, which entailed a front suspension change (to right-hand drive using a Heidts front crossmember, plus the removal of the Mustang's original spring towers) and a set of wheel tubs under the rear. For most people, that'd be a good, enthusiastic start to a project!

"Then I got busy again with work and family stuff," Michael says. "So I ended up leaving it for about three years. I got stuck into it again for about a year – body work, high-fill. Then it sat around again until I worked out where I wanted to go with the interior."

After nearly a decade of stop-start effort, work on the car got serious – and consistent – at the beginning of 2015. "I wanted to finish it for this year's MotorEx; that was the target," Michael says. "I've owned the car for 10 years, but realistically, it was a five-year build." That's a far more relaxed pace than his Mustang of a decade ago – it took just 12 months! "Yeah, that was flat-out, day and night!" he recalls.

ORIGINALLY, I WAS GOING TO RESTORE IT. THEN I THOUGHT: 'NAH, I'LL BUILD IT THE WAY I WANT'

Michael put the Muzzy on a rotisserie for the hours of grinding, linishing and everything else required to achieve an undercarriage that was good-looking enough for Old Skool Mick to apply the PPG Grigio Mistral paint.

"It's painted on the underside, just like on top," Michael says. "The panel beater turned down the task of doing the underside. He told me: 'If you want it looking like that, you do it!' So he made me do all the *[smoothing]* work at home. I'd finish work and hang out with my kids, and after they went to bed, I'd go out to the shed until the early hours of the morning."

Was it worth the effort? Michael laughs nervously. "I drove it just once and heard rocks chipping and I was thinking to myself: 'Oh no, I shouldn't be doing this!' To be honest, I'm trying to find someone who will put a coating underneath the whole car."

Michael was keen to replace the original 1960s seats with more contemporary pews, as a foundation for an upgraded interior.

DASH: The car was converted to right-hand drive over a Heidts upper/lower wishbone-type front suspension, with rack-and-pinion steering and an Ididit tilt steering column. Michael resisted the temptation for digital instruments, opting for classic needle-pointers instead. The shifter is a B&M Magnum, and the whole car was rewired by John and Joe at JS Auto Electrics

INTERIOR: The Mustang's seats are ex-Peugeot, heavily remodelled for their new role. The frame of the rear seat, in particular, required plenty of cutting and shutting over the course of a month. The Pug's retractable seatbelts were transplanted, too. A centre console was shaped and edged in pipe before having in-fill panels added, and then the whole shebang was covered in rich burgundy leather by Matt and Van from Deluxe Auto Trim

SIDE/DOOR GLASS: One-piece door glass is a nice trick that gives the Mustang a fresh look. Available for later models, but not this one, Michael had the anti-sun glass made before Garth from Rusty's Rod & Custom made it all work like factory. Garth is responsible for other details such as the recessed tail-lights, most of the engine bay and body smoothing (such as the deleted front indicators), as well as sorting the geometry for the coil-over rear suspension

"It was one of those situations where I didn't know exactly what I was looking for," he says. "I went to a European specialist wrecking yard and said: 'I'm looking for some seats to suit my Mustang,' and the bloke said: 'Nah, we don't do Mustangs.' So I explained that I was looking for something else that might work and look good. He let me look around and I eventually found these seats from a Peugeot."

One-piece door glass was made to replace the usual flipper windows. "You can buy one-piece glass for other models, but not for my model," Michael explains. "A few people reckoned it wouldn't work, but with a bit of mucking around with the winder mechanisms – we used '67 parts in the doors and relocated some holes – we made it happen."

Michael wanted plenty of power for his new project, too: "My old Muzzy had a 302 but this time around I went for a 351."

The engine was put together by a bloke called Giovanni. "He's a guru; he understands high-tech and high-tolerance. He's one of these blokes who can do anything and everything. I think of him as a bit of a MacGyver!" says Michael, referring to the fix-anything 1980s TV action hero. The 351 Windsor engines have a taller, wider block than the 302, which can sometimes affect fitment in narrow engine bays – but there were no such dramas here with the modified spring towers and fabricated extractors.

It's early days for the engine, with Michael aiming to keep the car clean and tidy for Summernats 29. "In all, I've only done about two hours of driving just to get it tuned," he says. "I want to keep it looking fresh for Summernats and then I'll begin driving it. I'm looking forward to that!"

MICHAEL SANDE
1965 FORD MUSTANG
Colour: PPG Grigio Mistral

MOTOR
Engine: Ford Windsor 351
Induction: DC&O quad throttlebodies on cast manifold, EMS 8860 computer
Heads: Dart 2 iron, Manley valves
Pistons: SRP
Crank: Harrop 383ci forged stroker
Rods: Eagle H-beam
Exhaust: Fabricated headers and exhaust by Garth at Rusty's Rod & Custom

GEARS
Gearbox: Al's Race Glides C4 auto, manualised
Shifter: B&M Magnum
Converter: 3000rpm
Diff: 9in, 3.5:1 gears

BENEATH
Springs: Heidts coil-overs (f & r); Heidts front A-arm conversion crossmember
Brakes: Wilwood discs and calipers (f & r)

ROLLING STOCK
Wheels: Showwheels Vista 5; 18in (f); 19in (r)
Tyres: Falken 215/40ZR18 (f), Pirelli 305/30ZR19 (r)

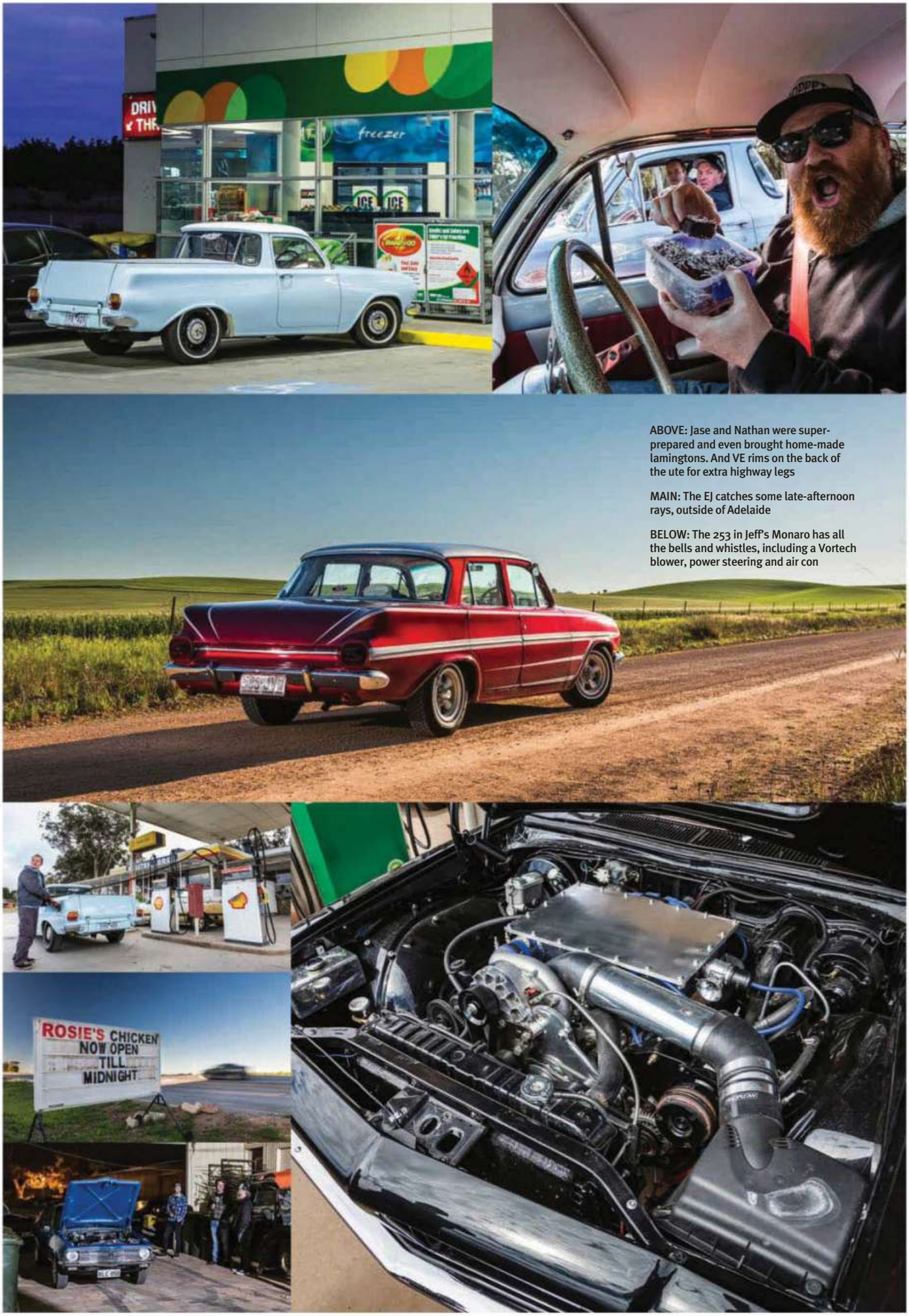
THANKS
My family for their patience and understanding; Garth, Rusty's Rod & Custom; Mick, Old Skool Smash & Restoration; Giovanni; Matt and Van, Deluxe Auto Trim; John and Joe, JS Auto Electrics; the two Petes, EMS

IT'S PAINTED ON THE UNDERSIDE. I DROVE IT AND HEARD ROCKS CHIPPING AND I WAS THINKING: 'OH NO, I SHOULDN'T BE DOING THIS'

STORY SIMON TELFORD
PHOTOS CHRIS THOROGOOD & NATHAN JACOBS

BIG COUNTRY

TELFO TACKLES THE 4300KM ROUND TRIP FROM MELBOURNE TO ALICE SPRINGS FOR RED CENTRE NATS



ABOVE: Jase and Nathan were super-prepared and even brought home-made lamingtons. And VE rims on the back of the ute for extra highway legs

MAIN: The EJ catches some late-afternoon rays, outside of Adelaide

BELOW: The 253 in Jeff's Monaro has all the bells and whistles, including a Vortech blower, power steering and air con

FAIR to say, I don't mind a road trip. So much so that when my EJ was first finished, photographer Simon Davidson and I used it as our transport to the inaugural drags at Barcaldine Airport in Queensland, a 3172km round trip from Davo's home in Bondi.

I've always wanted to add trips to Perth, Tassie and Alice Springs to the EJ's scorecard, so when Red CentreNATS was announced, I was there! I figured there would be a few lunatics who'd be keen to convoy to Alice Springs with me, and sure enough Jason Vandyk stuck his hand up, ready to take on the 4700km round trip.

Jason also has an EJ, though his is a ute and goes a whole lot faster than mine. I'd met Jason and his mate Nathan Lambert many years ago out on Lake Gairdner, where Jason and Nathan were racing an evil 1980s Pontiac Trans Am, stuffed full of blown and injected small-block. That car saw 200mph and surprised some of the older hands.

The pair have always had some interesting streeters, and Jason's EJ is no different. Despite appearing mostly stock it has had a ton of development to its 100-per-cent Holden driveline, with a Sprintex-supercharged Holden black motor doing the talking.

The fact Red CentreNATS has a drag racing element was the perfect lure for Jase – he'd get to prove the reliability of his concept with a mega outback drive, do some laps, then haul home.

Nathan volunteered to ride shotgun in the ute and two more of Jason's mates decided to sign up as well, both with interesting cars. Jeff Birchfield is a spray painter by trade, and it shows with the silky smooth panels on his HJ Monaro. Under the bonnet is a unique set-up, with a little 253 V8 taking boost from a Vortech blower through a blowthrough four-barrel deal. It also runs power steering, air con, rear airbags and a big stereo – a damn comfy car to tackle the run to Alice!

The quartet of Holdens was rounded out by Peter Traumanis's VTII. Packing a couple of low-mount turbos on a stock LS1, the Commodore makes some 600hp at the treads. And with a six-speed shifter and four-link rear, it's a unique combo.

The other boys had a fairly busy lead-up to the trip; Jason fitted a larger radiator and new gearbox to the ute, as well as cruise control and a new battery, while Jeff treated the Monaro to a last-minute paint job.

Pete was going to make the trip without fitting decent valve springs to his

I'VE ALWAYS WANTED TO ADD TRIPS TO PERTH, TASSIE AND ALICE SPRINGS TO THE EJ'S SCORECARD, SO WHEN RED CENTRE NATS WAS ANNOUNCED, I WAS THERE!

MAIN: Coober Pedy won the prize for the best welcome sign, topped by an old vacuum truck that had been used in the opal mining trade – the reason for the town's existence. A ULEGAL sticker on the truck told us that Mick Brasher had been there before us!

JEFF BIRCHFIELD
HJ MONARO

JEFF'S home-brewed Monaro is a thing of beauty. While it is dressed with an HQ Statesman grille, it is actually an HJ. The driveline consists of a 253 Holden V8, with a T5 five-speed and 3.08:1 10-bolt diff. Giving the little thong-slapper a bit of a kick-along is a Vortech supercharger, pumping 8psi into a plenum that holds a single 750DP carb. It may not be a rocket ship, but it gets along well and returned a respectable 10.5 litres per 100 clicks on our trip. Jeff gave it heaps too, but it never missed a beat. Down the track, Jeff plans to upgrade to a 308-based combo for some extra legs. Air con, power steer and a big stereo make for comfy cruising.

TELFO
EJ HOLDEN SPECIAL

MY EJ is unashamedly all show and no go. Instead of pouring my cash into making it faster, I concentrated on flash paint, custom trim and going through it mechanically from top to bottom. The driveline remains a mild grey motor, with a three-speed crash-box and unboosted drums all 'round. And you know what? If kept in good nick, that is all you need for daily commuting duties and epic road trips. Sure, it isn't fast (or economical – it used only slightly less fuel than Jason's blown black motor), but it is reliable as hell and lots of fun. There is a decent stereo hidden under the front seat for tunes and the bench seat makes a great desk for photo editing.

PETE TRAUMANIS
COMMODORE VTII HBD

THE newest car in our pack is every inch a street machine, with plenty of old-school tricks under the skin. The car started life as an HBD Exec with an LS1 six-speed, but Pete has tarted it up with lots of goodies from a VTII Clubby. The engine remains the factory LS1, with a new set of valve springs. The power-adder is a low-mount AVO twin-turbo system, with an air-to-air intercooler and an Aquamist water injection system. The six-speed remains – purely for the fun factor – with an uprated clutch and a 3.25:1 nine-inch diff suspended by a four-link designed by Pete and mate Mick Zahra. The VT ticks over at just 1380rpm at 110km/h, and returns 8.57L/100km.

ANY THOUGHTS THAT WE COULD JAM IN A 400KM ROUND-TRIP VISIT TO AYERS ROCK WERE DASHED. IT COULD BE DONE, BUT UNUSUALLY FOR THE *SM* TEAM, COMMON SENSE PREVAILED

JASON VANDYK
EJ HOLDEN UTE

JASON'S EJ ute (yes, it is an EJ, but with an EH front end) is a rolling testbed for his Holden six supercharger kit. His aim was to retain a basic Holden driveline from front to back, with a mild black motor, column-shift Trimatic auto and 3.08:1 BorgWarner diff, and create a car with excellent street manners, decent economy and lots of grunt! The result is a 300hp engine that idles around town like a Camry, runs 12.7s over the quarter and returns 14L/100km on the highway. The kit is based around a Sprintex supercharger, pumping 8psi boost into a ported VK Commodore EFI inlet manifold, with an Autronic ECU, LS1 injectors and fuel rail and a well-massaged 12-port head.

long-suffering LS1, but Jason wasn't having any of it. He ordered a set for Pete and fitted them himself.

My preparations were mainly based around preventative maintenance, though I did replace the accessory gauges in the EJ with new items that actually worked, something I'd been meaning to do since 2008.

Having been to the DLRA Speed Week in Lake Gairdner many times, Jason and Nathan were well-practised in covering the first half of our trip from Melbourne to Port Augusta, an 11-hour drive in one day.

Travelling at night in the bush is fraught with danger due to wildlife on the roads, so the plan was to leave as early as possible to ensure we got into Port Augusta before sundown.

After some inevitable stuffing around, we left the outskirts of Melbourne just after sunrise. Melbourne – of course – was cold and wet, but by the time we hit the Victorian/SA border things had brightened up considerably. National Highway A8 has a few shitty sections, but the major downfall of our route was heading across the top of Adelaide, which slowed progress considerably. Our late start and frequent stops for photos meant our goal of being at Port before sundown was dashed, so we motored the last hour or so in the dark. Luckily, furry critters on the roadside were few and far between. Once in town, we checked into the Big 4 and were treated to a slap-up barbecue in the shed by some very hospitable locals.

The target for Day Two was Coober Pedy, a mere 542km away. Leaving Port Augusta, the landscape really flattens out and starts to feel like genuine outback. The roads were pretty good, and as a bonus we were greeted by scores of vintage trucks heading home from the truckies' Hall of Fame gathering in Alice Springs. It was a beautiful section of road, and knowing that we were skirting the top of Lake Gairdner was neat.

Coober Pedy is the opal mining capital of the world and has something of a post-apocalyptic feel to it. We would have liked to spend more time checking it out, but Alice Springs was just 688km away.

We were trucking along quite nicely on Day Three and stopped at Marla Traveller's Rest roadhouse for fuel, where we met Kev from Western Australia in his AP5 sedan. The Val had a leaky carby, but with a bit of advice from our resident mechanic (Pete) he was soon on his way again and joined our convoy.

Only a couple of kilometres down the road the EJ decided to follow suit, pissing fuel out of the needle and seat. This was despite the fact I'd rebuilt the carbies before I left! Pete spotted that one of the hard fuel lines

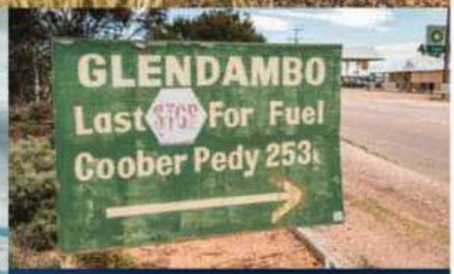
AS A BONUS, WE WERE GREETED BY SCORES OF VINTAGE TRUCKS HEADING HOME FROM THE TRUCKIES' HALL OF FAME GATHERING IN ALICE

We met our new mate Kev in the middle of nowhere. He was heading to Red CentreNATS from Perth in his push-button auto AP5. A leaky carby was soon fixed and he cruised the rest of the way with us. He then picked up his missus from the airport the next day – a class act!

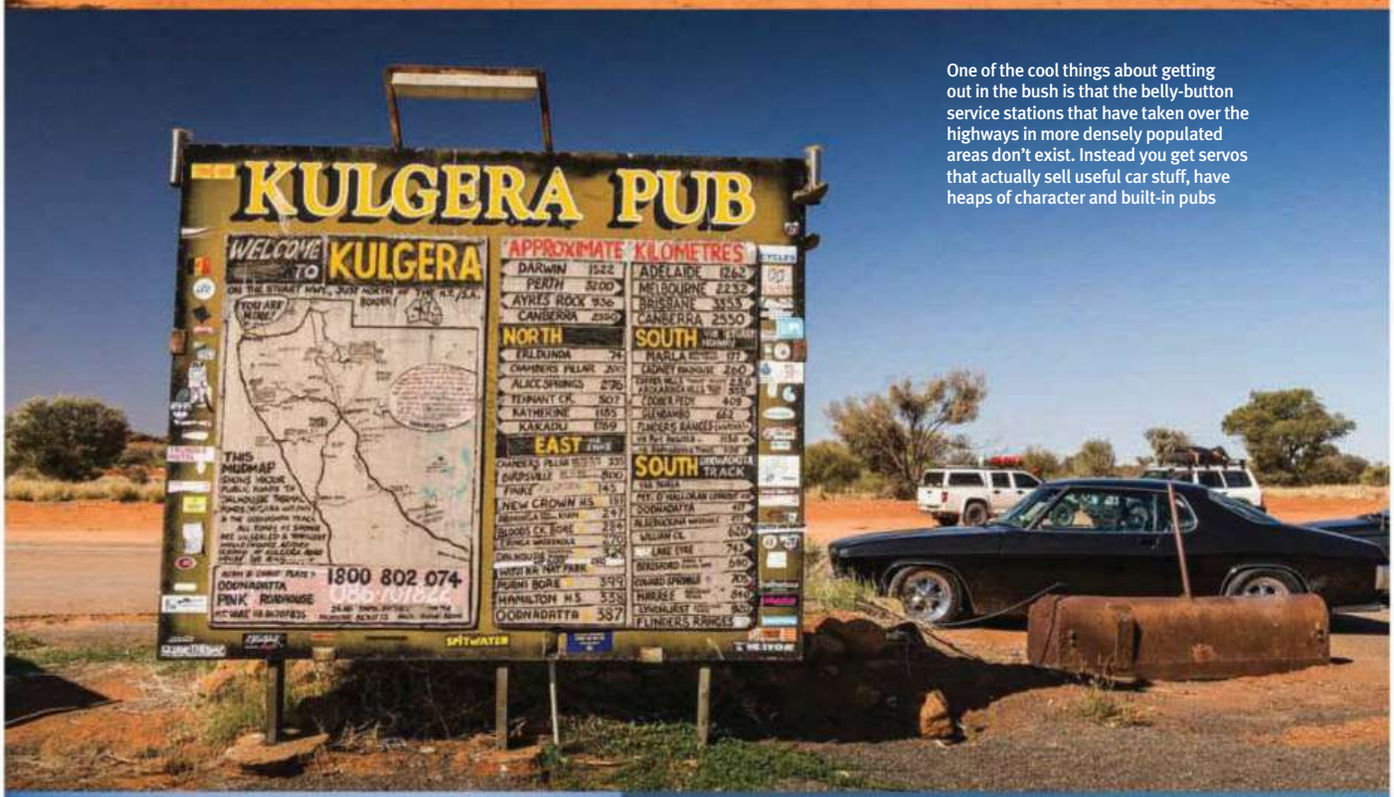
Past Port Augusta, there was little to trouble us in the way of errant wildlife or highway patrol, though we did see plenty of roadkill, including a horse. The road trains are limited to 100km/h and are easy to overtake , though they do knock the early Holdens around with wind when they pass in the other direction

BELOW: The National Road Transport Hall of Fame was on in Alice the previous weekend, so sights like this were common on the way up to Red CentreNATS

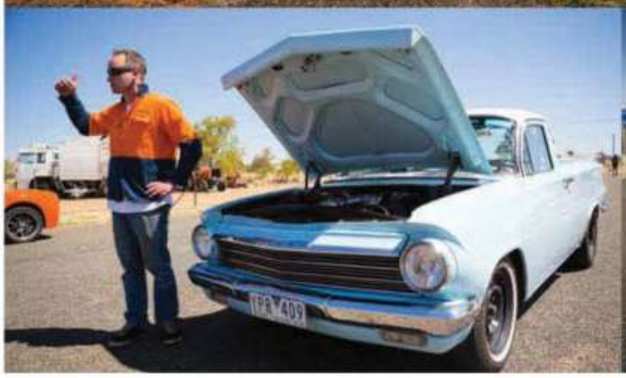
RIGHT: Fuel stops are nicely spaced between Port Augusta and Alice. You'd have to be a real dunce to get in trouble



ABOVE LEFT: Pete's VT recorded just over 600rwhp in Melbourne and did bang-on 607rwhp in Alice! The car was super-economical on the trip too, putting the older cars to shame



One of the cool things about getting out in the bush is that the belly-button service stations that have taken over the highways in more densely populated areas don't exist. Instead you get servos that actually sell useful car stuff, have heaps of character and built-in pubs



PETER, JASON AND I ALL HAD A LASH AT THE DRAGS, AND WHILE WE DIDN'T SET ANY RECORDS, WE HAD A FAT TIME ON WHAT IS ONE OF THE BEST REGIONAL QUARTER-MILE TRACKS IN THE LAND

was loose and needed a big turn to be properly tight, so it will need some attention now that I'm home.

A couple of hours later, we crossed into Northern Territory and soon found 130km/h speed limits. Yee-ha! I cranked the grey motor up, but couldn't crack more than 122 clicks on the GPS.

The self-proclaimed first and last pub in the Territory, at Kulgera, was the next stop and it's a beauty, with a killer roadhouse and good tucker. We got the chance to check out more vintage trucks as well as perve on some other hotties bound for Red CentreNATS.

Our final fuel stop for the day was just 200 clicks from Alice at Erldunda, where PULP was nearing the two-dollar mark. The turn-off to Uluru is here, and any thoughts that we could jam in a 400km round-trip visit to Ayers Rock were dashed. It could be done, but sometimes common sense prevails. This is unusual for the *SM* team, but we had a big weekend ahead.

The drive from Melbourne to Alice is one that I can recommend to anyone. There are enough fuel stops and accommodation options to make planning easy, the roads are good and the landscape is epic. There's bugger-all mobile coverage outside of the towns, which was all right by me.

You can check out our full Red CentreNATS coverage on page 74, but rest assured, we had fun. Peter, Jason and I all had a lash at the drags, and while the heat and altitude meant we didn't set any records, we had a fat time on what is one of the best regional quarter-mile tracks in the land. Pete also had a go at the dyno and not only pulled 607 ponies at the treads, but took out the competition as well.

On the way home, we decided to tackle the trip back to Melbourne in two days. We were all weary from a big weekend, but the cars were in good nick – even if the inside of the EJ resembled a particularly untidy brothel. Our plan was to get to Port Augusta in one hit and then make it to Melbourne the next day. Getting it done meant leaving before sunrise and demanded quick fuel stops – no time for sit-down feeds or long chin-wags this time.

It was hard yakka in the EJ and we didn't arrive at Port until well after dark. The other boys went out on a shed crawl, but after a steak and a lemon squash, we were done for the day. The final leg was more of the same, though we did stop in Adelaide to visit the Auto Transformers boys. We also checked out a cool FX Holden survivor in a country Holden dealership and got the mandatory photo with the unspeakably evil Giant Koala.

Soon after our meeting with that particularly unappealing marsupial, the sun went down and so did the rain. Driving the EJ in the wet and in the dark on some fairly average roads takes a bit of attention, so I slowed down and let the other guys go ahead. In fact, the Monaro smashed us all

The VT copped a hiding all weekend without protest , including multiple passes down the quarter-mile at Alice Springs Inland Dragway. Pete raced it on the same 275 Nankangs that he drove up on and ran a best of 11.40@134mph

LEFT: You'd excuse anyone for leaving the car in the shed after a 4700km road trip, but Pete and Jason headed straight out to Calder the weekend after we got back. Both ran PBs, an 11.13 for Pete's VT and a 12.77 for Jason's ute. Staunch!

ROAD TRIPS IN STREET MACHINES RULE, AND ARE EVEN BETTER IN GOOD COMPANY

on the way home and was back in Warragul before nightfall. Photographer Nathan and I didn't make it until nine-ish, but we were glad we'd shaved a whole day off our itinerary.

Now, after all that, you could have excused the boys if they took a few weeks off cars, but not this crew. To round the trip off, Jason and Pete took their rides to the opening meet at Calder Park the very next weekend and smashed out new PBs – a great testament to a couple of very well-sorted street cars. Naturally, both lads are both keen to go faster – Jason's ute will soon cop a tougher motor (still a Holden six, of course) and Pete's Commodore needs a new clutch.

What did we learn from all of this? Well, I learned that photographer Jacobs is a ninja at packing a car. Despite having to fit an extra spare tyre, heaps of fuel, spares, Esky and photography gear, he managed to squeeze everything in with room to spare. He says it comes from being a drummer, but I was impressed – it is a big thing to let another man pack your car!

We also learned that driving is a great way to get to know your own country, and that an all-sausage-roll diet is not good for you. The old adage 'if you pack plenty of spares, tools and fuel you'll be unlikely to need them' also proved true. Most of all, it confirmed that road trips in street machines rule, and are even better in good company. See you on the road next year!

ABOVE: One of the best things about travelling in the bush is the night sky! Check out those stars. For more pics from the trip, search for 'Red CentreNATS Convoy' on streetmachine.com.au. And turn to page 74 for more Red CentreNATS event coverage

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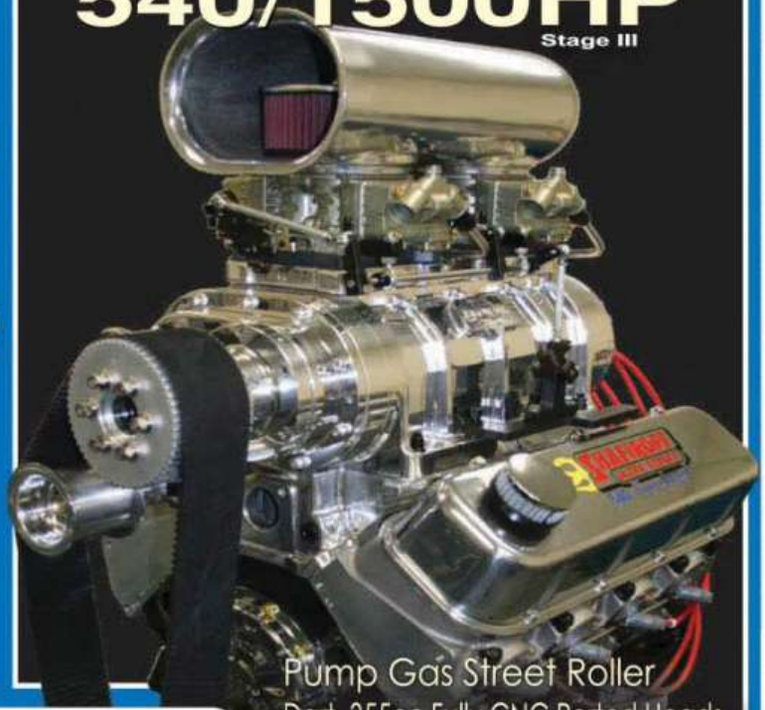

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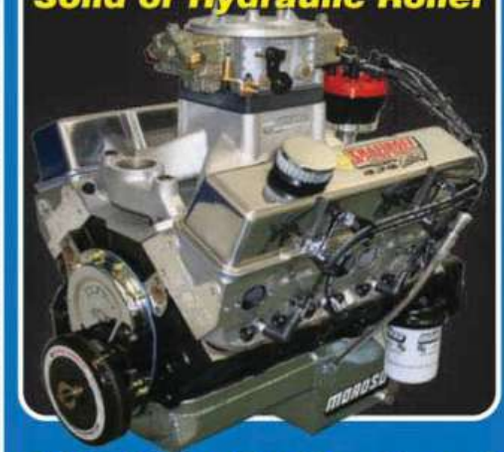

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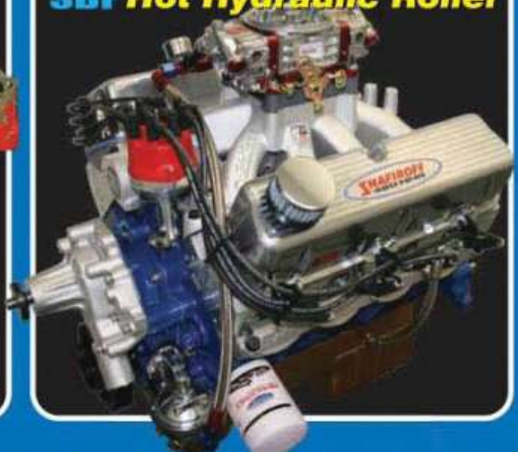

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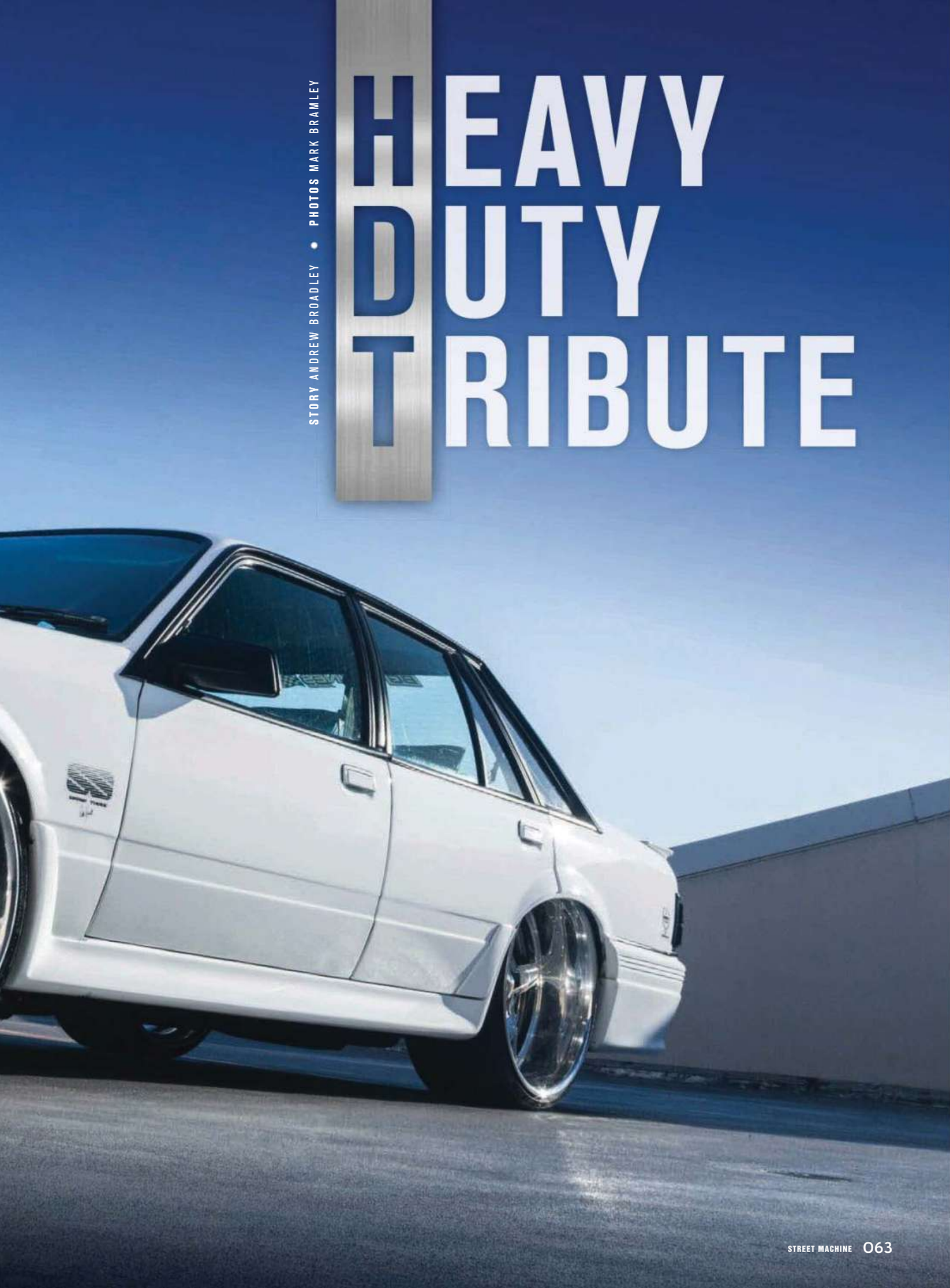
ALL AHMED ADDOUG WANTED WAS A MENTAL STREET CAR – THAT JUST HAPPENED TO BE A KILLER HDT GROUP THREE REPLICA

HEAVY DUTY TRIBUTE

STORY ANDREW BROADLEY • PHOTOS MARK BRAMLEY



PERHAPS it was Peter Brock's passing in 2006 that sparked a renewed interest in the HDT brand and its iconic back catalogue of high-performance Commodores. You could also put it down to the fact that they have 'come of age' and are now old enough to be considered classics. In any case, values of genuine early-girl HDTs have been heading steadily north of late.

As we know from experience with other classic muscle cars such as GT Falcons, when genuine cars appreciate in value to the point that they are no longer accessible to the masses, you start to see tribute cars being built out of 'lesser' models. As a result, HDT replicas are by no means thin on the ground these days, but Ahmed Addoug's VK is a tribute with a totally insane twist.

I WANTED TO BUILD A 1000HP STREET-DRIVEN CAR

"I wanted to build a 1000hp street-driven car," Ahmed says. He has achieved that objective with the VK's E85-chugging, 8/71-blown 403-cube LS, churning out a four-figure sum on the engine dyno. But it hasn't been an easy road.

The car was a factory 308/four-speed when Ahmed purchased it, but it needed some love. He started madly stockpiling parts and sent the car off to the panel beater. "Unfortunately they stuffed me around and took two years to get it finished," Ahmed says. "It was painted candy pink with tan trim and I got it running with a 6/71-blown 355ci Holden, but by the time it was finished I realised I didn't like the colour!"

Ahmed stripped the freshly built car and painted it candy green, then halfway through the build shipped it off to 2SUS Custom Resprays for them to finish off. Unfortunately, the boys at 2SUS weren't fans of the new colour, either. "They said the car wouldn't be leaving their shop painted candy green, so I told them to do whatever they wanted," Ahmed says. "I turned up a couple of weeks later and they'd painted it white!"

The look is based pretty heavily on the HDT Group Three, but with some tweaks to the body. "Once the 2SUS boys decided to paint it white, I thought let's go with the original Brock look, but with personalised bits and pieces that I wanted. The door and boot locks, aerial and fuel filler are all shaved."

A fresh blown 355 was built for the car, and the first time it was driven was at the One-Day Powerplay in Sydney, where it blew a head gasket on the first lap. Another motor was built just before Powercruise Sydney, and this time the failure was catastrophic. "It blew a head gasket, smashed three pistons and destroyed the block, again on the first lap," Ahmed laments.

Around that time he met a bloke by the name of Adam Hodge, who convinced him that LS power was the path to righteousness. After first considering a 6.0L with rods and pistons, the pair decided to go all-in and build a cast-iron stroker with an 8/71 blower instead.

A Callies DragonSlayer crank was used, along with Callies Ultra rods and SRP pistons. Heads are ported L98 jobbies, while the camshaft is a Comp Cams roller, ground specifically for the application. The Blower Shop 8/71 pump is sandwiched between a pair of QFT 750cfm carbs and a Pro Billet blower manifold, and doesn't it all look very shiny? Even with all that horsepower on offer, it's every bit as functional as it is easy on the eye.

EXTERIOR: It's like an HDT, only tougher. Besides the obvious metal mountain and Group Three body kit, a host of subtle visual tweaks including shaved door and boot locks, aerial and fuel filler make for a smooth look. Wheels are Intro Rockman in 22x8.5 and 22x12, wearing 235/30/22 and 335/25/22 tyres respectively

ENGINE: Custom sheet metal work by Elite Fabrications makes for a stunning engine bay. The engine itself is pretty easy on the eye too, courtesy of a Blower Shop billet blower case, custom-made billet blower manifold, custom billet head covers and fabricated stainless-steel coil covers, among other highlights

INTERIOR: If you squint, it almost looks like a factory HDT interior. Scheel bucket seats are a common fitment up front, but not so common in the rear. They're wrapped in original HDT Scheel material, and a genuine HDT twirler was also used. Dakota Digital instruments have pride of place in a custom cluster within the standard dash, and an original HDT Eurovox stereo was fitted. Good luck hearing it!

BOOT: This ain't no backyard 44-gallon-drum tub job. The entire boot floor was cut from the car and replaced with a bespoke sheet-metal floor. The enormous fuel cell means Ahmed can haul around enough E85 for a decent weekend cruise

With the engine out, the opportunity for an engine bay overhaul was too good to pass up. "When we decided to do the bay it started out as a minor tidy-up, but it got a little out of hand," Ahmed admits. "In the end I decided I didn't want one single hole or bolt showing." Elite Fabrications tackled all the fab work in the engine bay, fitting a flat firewall, boxing the chassis rails and headlights, smoothing out the radiator support, and welding on the guards to get rid of the unsightly bolts. Even the inner guards were cut from the car, remanufactured and welded back in.

At the same time, Ahmed figured that the trim was the wrong colour, and went completely back to the drawing board. Again there's a very distinct HDT flavour, but it's been heavily modernised. HDT Scheel buckets were used up front, but an additional pair was modified and installed in place of the rear bench. The factory dashboard was reconditioned – even the standard issue Eurovox head unit remains – but a Dakota Digital cluster now relays engine vitals to Ahmed in a far more concise, accurate, and aesthetically pleasing fashion than the 1980s analogue unit could ever do.

By the time Powercruise 54 rolled around, Ahmed was hoping the switch to LS power would help the car go the distance, and it was a case of third time lucky. "It lasted the whole three days this time, and I had plenty of fun in it," he says.

But the fun didn't end there. Conscious of the fact that the diff was in need of a birthday, Ahmed reasoned there was simply no sense in building a new diff without tubbing the car. It was hauled back to Elite Fabrications, who tubbed it to accommodate the 22x12in Intro Rockman wheels, and put the new four-link rear end together. "I was hanging out at the workshop one night while they were tubbing the car, and we decided to cut the whole boot floor out and make a custom sheet-metal one," Ahmed says. "It looks a bit tidier; it's different and works well with all the other mods."

I TRY TO GET OUT AT LEAST EVERY SATURDAY; THE BOYS AND I REALLY ENJOY IT

By now you're probably questioning whether or not this blown and tubbed monster genuinely does get driven on the street. "I drive it a lot, actually," Ahmed says. "I try to get out at least every Saturday; the boys and I really enjoy it. But one of the main reasons I built the car is for events like Powercruise. I want to race it one day just to see what it's capable of, but I'm more interested in powerskids than racing."

AHMED ADDOUG 1985 HOLDEN VK COMMODORE

Paint: Nissan White

ENGINE

Brand: Iron-block 403ci LS
Induction: Pro Billet blower manifold, The Blower Shop 8/71 supercharger, twin Quick Fuel Technology 750cfm carbs
Heads: Ported L98
Camshaft: Comp Cams roller, custom grind
Conrods: Callies Ultra
Pistons: SRP
Crank: Callies DragonSlayer
Oil pump: Melling
Fuel system: Aeromotive A2000 pump
Cooling: Custom PWR radiator, twin thermo fans
Exhaust: Custom 1⅞in headers, twin 3in exhaust
Ignition: MSD 6LS, MSD leads, LS3 coil packs

TRANSMISSION

Gearbox: Turbo 400
Converter: Dominator 3500rpm
Diff: Sheet-metal nine-inch, full spool, 3.25:1 gears, 35-spline axles

SUSPENSION & BRAKES

Springs & Shocks: Koni coil-overs (f), Strange coil-overs (r)
Brakes: 330mm discs, AP Racing calipers (f), 315mm discs, AP Racing calipers (r)
Master cylinder: Wilwood pedal box

WHEELS & TYRES

Rims: Intro Rockman; 22x8.5 (f), 22x12 (r)
Rubber: 235/30/22 (f), 335/25/22 (r)

THANKS

Adam 'H8FORD' Hodge – this wouldn't have been possible without you; Bassa and Fuf at 2SUS Custom Resprays; Damian and Mick at BG Engines; Sefwen at Hamdan Towing; Brad from Westside; Rohan at Rocket Industries; Greg at Mascot Motor Trimmers; Nathan at Elite Fabrications; Fuf, Stevie Pee and Ricky Cee for all the late nights and support; my number-one fan Anthony 'HLDTYT'; my mum and sisters for their support during the build; all my friends for their ideas, encouragement and support

TUFFNU
VICTORIA

ROCKING The BOAT

STORY BRYCE MICHELMORE — **PHOTOS** CHRIS THOROGOOD

WITH A BIG-BLOCK UP FRONT AND A BOTTLE OF NITROUS IN THE BOOT, VITO DE FRANCESCO'S FAIRLANE IS A LUXURY BARGE THAT'S BUILT FOR SPEED

ROCKING BOAT

THERE wouldn't be too many people crazy enough to stick a big block in a big ol' luxury Ford. Vito De Francesco isn't big on convention though. A panel beater by trade, he smooths concrete for a living instead because he can't stand working inside. He's also got a lot of good mates down Geelong way and they do some pretty crazy things with cars.

This car was actually meant to be an HSV ClubSport. At least that's what Vito went to buy when he made the trip to a local car dealer at the ripe old age of 19. His mate suggested the near-new Fairlane was a better bet. "I listen to stupid ideas," Vito says. "The ClubSport was next to the Fairlane and my mate goes: 'You should buy this, drop it on its balls and black the windows. It'll be gangster!' And I went: 'Y'know what, let's do it for shits and giggles!'"

Believe it or not, the full-on conversion to big-block power began as a simple starter motor replacement. "It started out as a joke," Vito says. "I blew the starter motor and it sat there for two years. So I thought: 'Stuff it, it's time for it to go. Let's change the starter motor.' I took it around to Tim 'Creep' Holmyard's joint and all of a sudden it's got a big-block in there." Far be it from me to say that Vito is easily influenced, but there's a definite pattern emerging here!

According to Vito the conversion wasn't particularly difficult. Most of the parts are off-the-shelf. "[The big-block] fitted in there better than the original motor," Vito says. "Three days and we had it in there, and that includes making engine mounts, transmission mounts, everything. It was really easy."

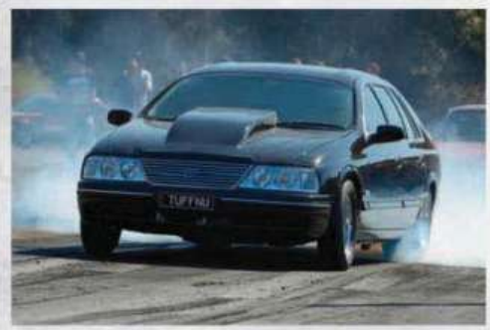
The project then went on for another 18 months while Tim built the powerhouse engine and Vito allowed his wife to assume that the vehicle was actually gone. When it made a re-appearance more than a year and a half later, she was less than impressed. "She thought I got rid of the car," Vito says. "I drove it in the driveway and she goes: 'Have you still got that car?' And I went: 'Yeah, it's just a little bit faster now!'" Vito's wife's attitude has mellowed with time though. "As long as it makes me happy, she's cool," he says.

The big-block Ford is a 545ci monster running a set of Kaase P-51 heads, an Edelbrock Performer inlet manifold and a 1250 Dominator carby under the reverse-cowl hood. A Scat crankshaft spins in Clevite bearings and works a set of Diamond pistons with Total Seal rings attached to Scat H-beam conrods. There's a Canton sump down below and lubrication duties are handled by a Kaase pump. The bumpstick is an HRE Custom unit, with a set of Competition lifters and Manton pushrods opening the Ferrea valves, which run PAC triple springs. Spark is provided by an MSD dizzy.

The monster motor has been tested on a chassis dyno and is good for 961 horses at the wheels, with help from the Wilson direct-port 200-shot nitrous kit.

Vito's been running the car at Heathcote since he became persona non grata at Calder Park. "I took it to Calder once and got kicked out

MY MATE GOES: 'YOU SHOULD BUY THIS, DROP IT ON ITS BALLS AND BLACK THE WINDOWS. IT'LL BE GANGSTER!'



ENGINE: According to Vito the conversion to big-block mumbo wasn't particularly difficult, with the new donk fitting even better than the original engine. Most of the parts were available off the shelf and the conversion took just three days, including making transmission and engine mounts

INTERIOR: There aren't too many sub-10-second street cars kicking around with factory leather and woodgrain trim; this thing really does embody speed and style. The dash is stuffed full of Auto Meter gauges to keep Vito informed of the vitals, while a B&M shifter swaps the cogs

BOOT: There's not much room for the shopping in this boot – it's all about straight-line speed, with a sunken battery, full-race fuel cell with Edelbrock pumps, a Racepak Sportsman datalogger and a dirty big bottle of nitrous to keep life interesting

VITO DE FRANCESCO 1999 FORD FAIRLANE GHIA

Colour: Custom cherry black

GRUNT

Engine: 545ci big-block Ford
Inlet manifold: Edelbrock Performer
Carb: 1250 Dominator
Heads: Kaase P-51, Ferrea valves, PAC triple valve springs
Pistons: Diamond, Total Seal rings
Crank: Scat, Clevite bearings
Rods: Scat H-beam
Cam: HRE Custom, Competition lifters, Manton pushrods
Oil system: Canton sump, Kaase pump
Fuel system: Sunken fuel cell, Edelbrock pump
Nitrous: Wilson direct-port 200-shot
Ignition: MSD
Exhaust: Custom

SHIFT

Transmission: Powerglide
Converter: TCE converter
Tailshaft: Three-inch, Strange 1350-series yoke and universal joints
Diff: Full-floating 9in, 35-spline, Truetrac centre

BENEATH

Brakes: Slotted discs, standard calipers (f & r)
Springs: Stock six-cylinder (f), QA1 adjustable (r)
Shocks: Koni 90/10 (f), QA1 adjustable (r)

ROLLING

Rims: Center Line Convo Pro (f & r)
Rubber: M/T 165/80R15 (f), Sumitomo 295/50R15 (r)

INTERIOR

Gauges: Auto Meter
Shifter: B&M

It only takes Vito 20 minutes to change the tyres, carby and sparkplugs and put the big Fairlane back to street trim for a cruise with the kids. There's a 'cage and a 'chute to come soon though, so a quick strip-to-street makeover will become a bit more difficult then

because I went too fast," he says. "The guy goes: 'Mate, obviously this car goes a lot quicker than the 10.7 you're supposed to be doing, when you're standing on the brake at half-track.' And I went: 'Yeah, all right, you got me.'" The Fairlane has so far run a best of 9.7@147.8mph. That's getting pretty quick, so a rollcage and a 'chute are on the agenda before Vito sees any more track time.

The big luxury barge runs on E85 fuel pumped by an Edelbrock unit and stored in a sunken fuel cell out back. Cooling duties are handled by a PWR radiator and the spent gases exit via a custom exhaust.

Cogs are swapped with a Powerglide slush box running a TCE converter, and power gets to the rear wheels through a three-inch tailshaft running a 1350-series Strange yoke and universal joints. There's a full-floating nine-inch out back with 35-spline axles and a Truetrac centre. It's mounted by a custom four-link set-up engineered by Geelong Diffs and suspended via a set of QA1 adjustable coil-overs.

Up front are stocky six-cylinder springs with Koni 90/10 shockers. Brakes and steering were more than adequate from the factory, so Vito left those alone. Wheels are Center Line Convo Pros for street duties, running 165/80R15 M/Ts on the front and 295/50R15 Sumitomo rubber at the business end.

Vito's mate Carl works at Fyans Street Panels and he handled the painting duties. Vito thought it was going to be a straight respray in the original colour, but Carl had other ideas. "I don't even know the colour of the paint," Vito says. "It's black, but it's a custom cherry black.

"When it came out I went: 'That's got red pearl in it,' and Carl goes: 'Do you like it?' Stiff shit if I didn't," Vito laughs.

Vito has another project waiting in the wings – a '67 XR Falcon that'll sport turbo power. We can't wait to see what he – and his talented and persuasive mates – come up with.

THE FAIRLANE HAS RUN A BEST OF 9.7@147.8MPH. THAT'S GETTING PRETTY QUICK, SO A ROLLCAGE AND A 'CHUTE ARE ON THE AGENDA

THANKS: Tim 'Creep' Holmyard – honestly, I couldn't have done it without him. He was with me every step of the way and good mates are hard to find; Johnny Dyno for a lot of advice; Geelong Diffs; Carl & Fyans Street Panels; Stef Buccella from Westernlink Automotive for killer tune and support; the missus for not getting too upset; all the crew that helped

WELCOME TO
SPRINGS
FOR TOURIST INFORMATION
BLOWN
LIQUI MOLY
ENTRANT
SICKO

STORY BORIS VISKOVIC **PHOTOS** NATHAN JACOBS, CHRIS THOROGOOD & BV

THE RED HEART

SOME OF AUSTRALIA'S TOUGHEST CARS JOURNEYED TO ALICE SPRINGS ON THE FATHER'S DAY WEEKEND FOR DRAG RACING, BURNOUTS AND (LEGAL) CRUISING AT THE INAUGURAL RED CENTRE NATS

YOU know you're in for a good time at a car festival when the chief minister – effectively the premier – of the host region says: "Have fun, but don't be a dickhead." Yep, those words actually left the mouth of the Northern Territory's head of government, Adam Giles, and no one at the official opening of the inaugural Red CentreNATS took offence. For a politician, he seems like a pretty normal bloke.

Adam got on stage before the Friday night concert, and I have to say it was the first time I have ever heard a politician of any description universally cheered by the assembled crowd. He's been totally supportive of the event, and even mentioned during his speech that they have a five-year plan – which means this was no one-off. He and his team have worked hard to get Red CentreNATS off the ground and they're going to make sure it soars. He's definitely got the vote of the street machining community at the next election, I'll give you the tip.

For those who don't know, Red CentreNATS was put on by the NT government in association with the guys from Street Machine Summernats. It would have been a nice change for 'Nats co-owners Andy Lopez, Dom McCormack and Andrew Bee to be welcomed with open arms by the local government and actually have their suggestions taken on board. The whole event had a real feeling of acceptance and welcoming from the local community.

01: Robert Berry's chopped and channelled '34 Ford is a weapon. It was originally hot-rodded back in the early-50s, so it's an original body and chassis. It had a bit of a makeover sometime in the 80s, so it's got a digital dash and ball-milled dress-up bits

02: That's not Matt Sharp 'fat-arming' out of his super-tough '67 Camaro, it's his passenger; the car is still left-hook. It not only looks tough, but has the muscle to turn those giant meats with ease

03: Steve MacGregor brought his super-sano HZ up from Melbourne. Powered by a 383ci Holden, the car's run a best of 10.81 at Calder on PULP and managed a best of 10.91 in Alice

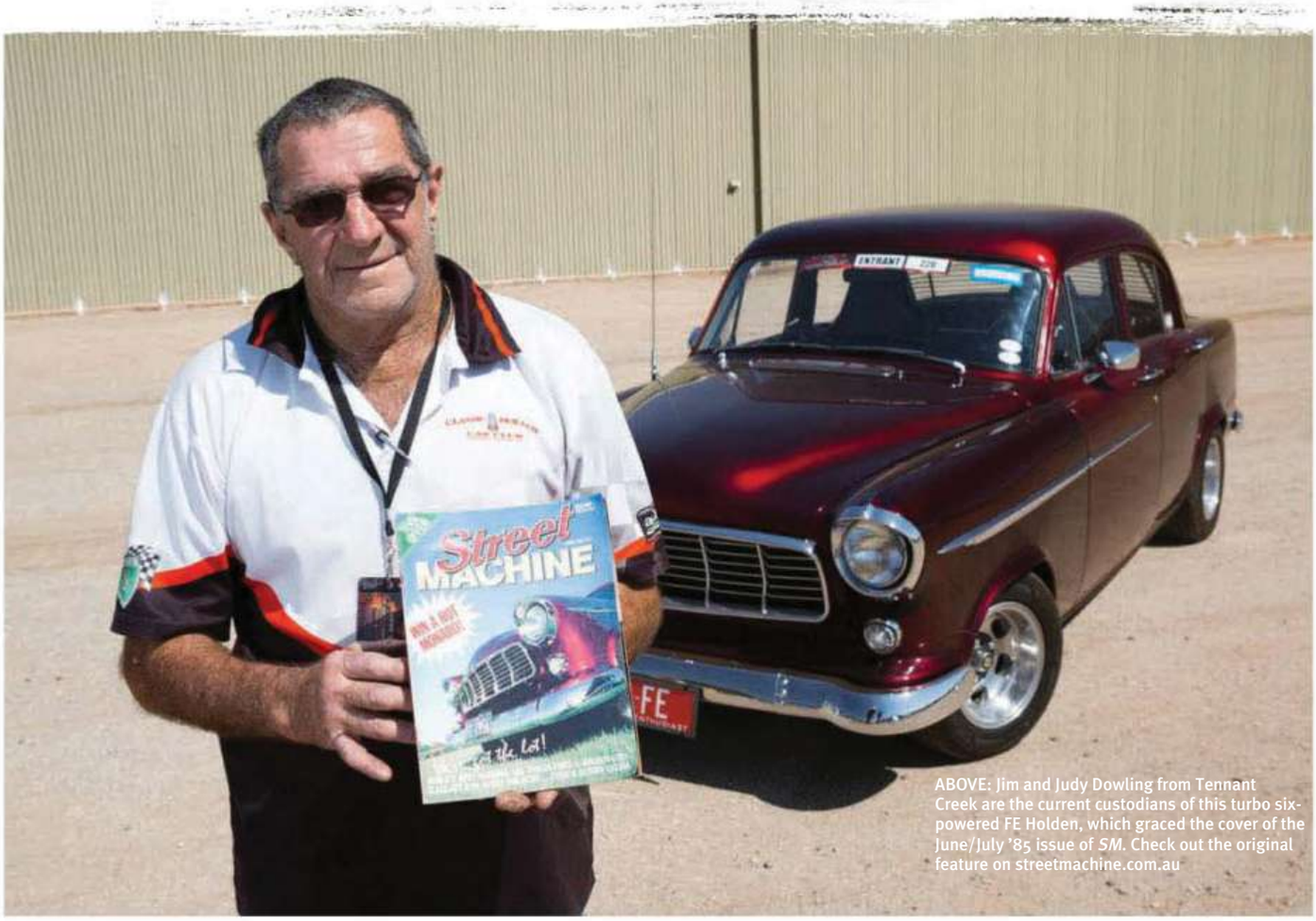
04: Lynchy cruising the streets of Alice in his mental Corolla. On Saturday he took Mark Beretta from Channel 7's Sunrise program for a spin on the burnout pad

05: Alice Springs local Pete Templeton led the street cruise in his Model A, with the mayor riding shotgun

06: Jesse McMahon's '41 Chevy pick-up was built by Eldred Hotrod Shop in Pennsylvania. It might look rough, but it has a nicely detailed chassis, cool interior and tidy engine bay

07: John Kalantzis brought his HK Monaro up from Renmark, SA. I can confirm that the car handles the dragstrip a lot better than it does roundabouts!

ORGANISERS WOULD HAVE BEEN HAPPY WITH 100 ENTRIES, BUT AROUND 450 CARS MADE THEIR WAY TO THE MIDDLE OF OZ



ABOVE: Jim and Judy Dowling from Tennant Creek are the current custodians of this turbo six-powered FE Holden, which graced the cover of the June/July '85 issue of *SM*. Check out the original feature on streetmachine.com.au

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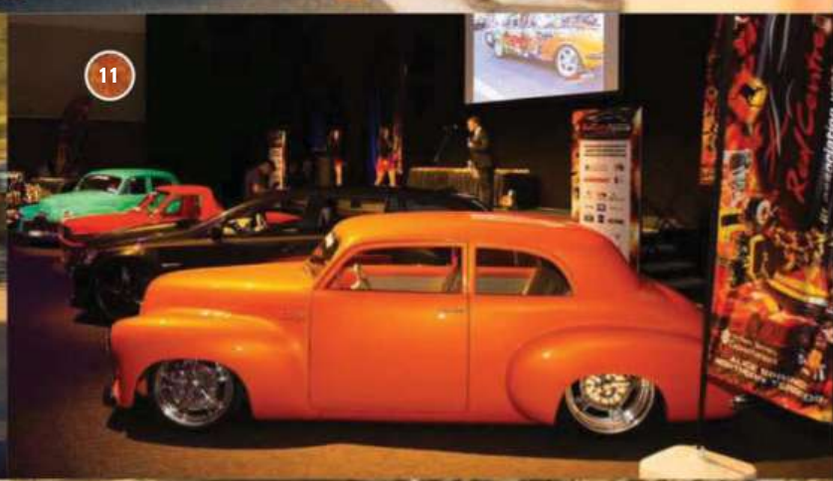
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MAIN: The Grand Champion gong was won by John Curwen Walker's FX. Built by Ken Neilsen and featured in *SM* in Oct/Nov '93, this is one car that has stood the test of time! It scored a spot in the Elite Top 10 and John gave it a thrashing in the grass driving event and at the drags

SOME BLOKE EVEN GOT THE NURSES TO ROLL HIS BED OUT OF THE HOSPITAL SO HE COULD CHECK OUT THE TOWN CRUISE

08: Chief Minister Adam Giles has fine taste in automobiles, as he picked Duncan McKinstray's '34 Chev roadster/coupe as his favourite car of the event. He was most likely impressed by the flawless black paint, beautifully detailed blown small-block and the smoky burnouts at the dragstrip. It did plenty of cruising, too, and looked good doing it

09: David Cufone's 1FATRAT Chevelle is a car usually only seen on a burnout pad, but it cuts a fine figure on the street as well

10: Brian Ferguson's 'Pink Bits 2' XB Falcon is a survivor from the 80s, when colour-coded bumpers and bright graphics were king

11: The event finished up with a formal dinner and awards night. Dave Keen's FJ took out a bunch of trophies, including People's Choice

12: Dave Carter had two cars in the Elite Hall and nabbed two Top 10 spots – one for a blown big-block-powered HQ tonner and the other an XW. He was crowned the top entrant from the NT

13: The Bonetti family rocked up in force from SA. You might have seen Frank Quaini's '32 at MotorEx. Dave Bonetti's small-block-powered five-window went head-to-head running low 10s with Serge's three-window big-block beast all weekend. Jason's '34 three-window didn't race, but it certainly wouldn't have embarrassed itself with its blown big-block

"It's a fantastic excuse to come to Alice Springs," Andy Lopez said. "Beautiful, crazy cars being allowed to drive on the streets – unbothered, registered, insured, all that sort of thing – by the government. It is pretty visionary. There's no bullshit, it's just good ideas – let's get it done, it's going to be good and let's make it work."

For the first show, expectations weren't that high. Organisers would have been happy if they got 100 entries, but they did way better than that with around 450 cars making their way to the middle of Australia to take in three days of motoring fun mixed in with just enough mayhem.

The event kicked off Friday, but really stepped up a gear as the sun started to set and everyone lined up for the town cruise – and when I say everyone, I mean everyone! I would hazard a guess that every single person that was in Alice Springs on Friday evening was either part of the cruise or part of the crowd lining the street. Apparently some bloke even got the nurses to roll his bed out of the hospital so he could check it out!

The locals were more than happy to have a whole bunch of revheads rock up on the Father's Day weekend, and they showed it in their support of the event – not just by lining up for the free

look at the cruise, but buying tickets to check out the show 'n' shine at Blatherskite Park and showing up in record numbers to Alice Springs Inland Dragway to watch the drag racing and burnouts. If there were rafters, people would have been hanging off them.

While having the event spread over two locations didn't suit everyone's needs, especially the burnout competitors who had to cart tyres and tools across to the drag strip, the fact that people had to actually leave the main venue meant there were all sorts of cars cruising around town for the entire three-day weekend. A tubbed Corolla with a blown methanol V8, you say? No problems sir, Macca's is that way.

Guys like Gary and Jake Myers, Lynchy and Ryan Pearson were happily cruising around waving to the police – as long as the car had working lights, a horn and passed a quick safety inspection, and had some attempt at an exhaust to keep the sound to a dull roar, you were good to go. The cruising did fry the magneto in Gary and Jake's Mustang, which is why you won't see any pics of it in the skid comp – but we do have pics of it in the Macca's car park!

Andy Lopez says that Red CentreNATS could grow to be bigger than Summernats in five years. To be honest, I hope it doesn't get that big. It definitely needs to grow, but it should still feel like the friendly country town with the awesome bakery that you visited as a kid – you don't want a shopping mall and every fast food chain setting up shop. I'm sure they'll get the balance right, and we'll be back next year for sure.

14: That guy in the middle having a great old time is Adam Giles, the chief minister of the NT and the main man responsible for getting Red CentreNATS off the ground

15: Brian Willis's immortal HK Monaro took out a spot in the Top 10. It was featured in the July/Aug '94 edition of *SM*

16: Rick Postrak brought two cars to Red CentreNATS. A customised VR Commodore wagon with graphics and an earth-shaking stereo system, and this LJ Torana that mixed old-school muscle with modern show-car detailing. Built by Pete Hondow at Custom Automotive, it was great to see a triple-Webered red motor in the engine bay instead of a V8. Plenty of chrome, braided hose and red/blue AN fittings make it look like an 80s *SM* cover car, but poke your head inside the cab and a full custom leather interior takes it right into the 21st century

17: Glenn Mackle, a Kiwi from Christchurch, picked up this survivor 253-powered HQ Premier in Queensland, then drove it to Red CentreNATS. The car copped a bit of TLC before the long haul to Alice, and that 'roo bar got a bit of workout – thankfully just once. This will be a nice addition to the other half dozen HQs he already has

18: Ryan Pearson had a great time cruising HOLDON around town. He also finished second in the Pro Class burnouts. How cool is that?

19: Peter Slattery's gorgeous '66 Plymouth VIP coupe was all class. It's pretty stock apart from a nice set of 18in Cragars, but why mess with 60s perfection?

ANDY LOPEZ SAYS THAT RED CENTRENATS COULD GROW TO BE BIGGER THAN SUMMERNATS IN FIVE YEARS

BELOW: Local Gary Nightingale was there in his Weiand-blown SBC-powered FX, surrounded by a fleet of other hot Holdens belonging to his tribe

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THE burnout comp at Red CentreNATS proved to be a cracker of a show. There was plenty of local talent keen to compete on a larger stage, with many making the trek down from Darwin to face off against the interstate competition.

Like most skid comps these days, the field was split into two classes – your regular Burnout class and the invite-only Burnout Masters, which boasted a star-studded line-up of experts in the art of tyre destruction. But spectators might have been hard-pressed to tell when the regular guys finished and the masters started up. There was plenty of smoke, big tip-ins and smashed tyres from every competitor, and a huge variety of cars – and I'm pretty sure there wasn't a single VN Commodore bouncing the V6 off the limiter.

The pad looked pretty big to me, but that didn't stop quite a few people tagging the wall. The best effort in that particular endeavour would have been Denham Schulz in his silver BMW – not your usual choice for a burnout car, but having been one beneficiary of the #Isallthethings campaign, the little Bimmer now had no troubles turning the tyres. After hitting the pad pretty fast and tipping the car in, no amount of accelerator-mashing from Denham could stop the rearward motion and the car backed into the wall hard enough to crease the quarter. He still made the finals, albeit minus the bumper and with some sketchy panel work to pull the dent out a little.

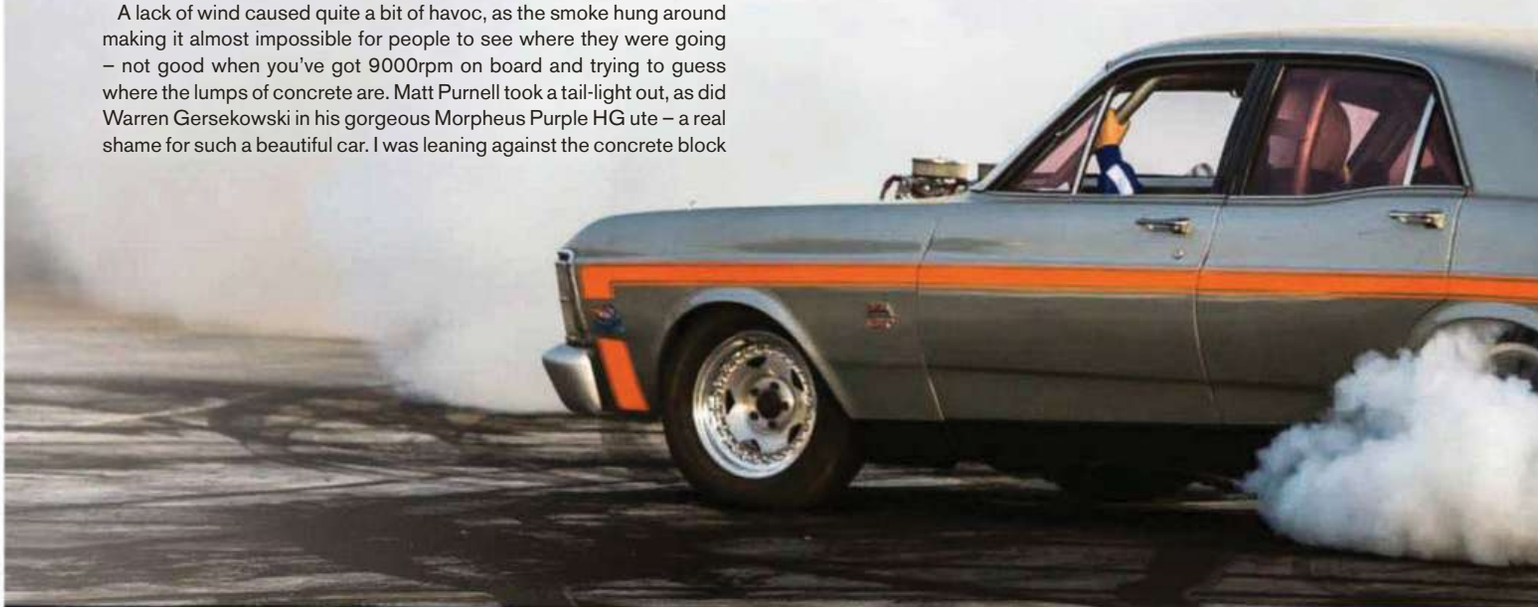
A lack of wind caused quite a bit of havoc, as the smoke hung around making it almost impossible for people to see where they were going – not good when you've got 9000rpm on board and trying to guess where the lumps of concrete are. Matt Purnell took a tail-light out, as did Warren Gersekowski in his gorgeous Morpheus Purple HG ute – a real shame for such a beautiful car. I was leaning against the concrete block when he hit it and I felt it move – and those blocks weigh 21 tonnes!

The guys with smaller cars made the most of it, usually heading back up the chute to chuck a few donuts in the narrow run-in to the pad, but it takes a special kind of crazy – and skill – to try that with something a bit larger. Fred Watson had no problems whipping the FEAR Monaro around, and that's probably one of the reasons he finished on top in the Masters comp, in a very tough field.

The minor placings were filled by Ryan Pearson in HOLDON – who probably used more fuel cruising than he did doing burnouts – and Darren Green in LX383, whose blown small block Torana whipped into the pad hard before blotting out the sky.

There was some real quality on show, with great skids from David Cufone, Darran Williams and Cliff Brockwell, so it was a well-earned win for Fred Watson, who was absolutely stoked when it was announced. He still wants that Summernats crown though – now more than ever.

In a great win for the locals in the regular burnouts, Kristan Butler and his yellow MENACE Corolla put on an awesome show with impeccable control, plenty of smoke and a well-presented car. He edged out Clayton Farmer's candy red Commodore ute and Adrian Froon in SKIDVAL to earn an invite to Summernats. A very deserving and popular winner.



STORY BORIS VISKOVIC PHOTOS NATHAN JACOBS & BV

BURN, BABY, BURN!

SOME OF THE BEST BURNOUT COMPETITORS IN THE LAND TURNED UP THE HEAT AT RED CENTRE NATS

20: Kristan Butler could rightly be called the Burnout King of the NT. He won at Gazzanats Darwin and has taken out many local comps in his LS-powered KE20 Corolla. This car was orange not too long ago, but after seeing that Mick Brasher had repainted his Corolla the same colour, Kristan got out the spray gun and laid on some pearl yellow at his own shop, KC Customs Panel & Paint

21: Fred Watson's FEAR took out the Pro Class comp

22: Darren Green made the trek over from WA where he is well known for his burnouts and powerskid prowess. Now the rest of the country knows, after finishing third in the Burnout Masters class with his blown small block Chev combo

23: John Pilla from Powerhouse Engines showed no mercy in this HQ ute, but that's probably because it was a customer's car! I He also cruised it through town and had a lash at the drags

24: James Rees doing what he does best. The stroker 292 up near the limiter making bags of smoke and putting on a great show

25: Luke Matthews tore it up on the strip and the burnout pad in his 'pie light' Cortina

26: Peter and Debbie Gray stepped up the ante to the tune of about 8000hp when they slotted in an old motor that Darren Morgan had laying around. The keyboard warriors went into overdrive right away claiming BS on the horsepower claims. However, no one that was actually there and who felt it through the ground was doubting it. A broken spindle put an end to the show early, but it was still mightily impressive

27: Sean Basford's Celica put on a great show on the Saturday night, but fuel pressure woes stopped the show on Sunday. It is now fixed and ready for Gazzanats!

28: Craig Hawke's Suzuki Stockman is not something you see too often on a burnout pad. Not sure what he's running in it, but it's probably not the stock 359cc two-cylinder two-stroke!

MAIN: Des Groves did a great job in his XW GT, starting with a spectacular tip-in

STORY BORIS VISKOVIC PHOTOS NATHAN JACOBS & BV

STRAIGHT SHOOTING

RED CENTRE NATS SAW PLENTY OF WHEELS-UP QUARTER-MILE ACTION

IT IS pretty amazing that a little country town like Alice Springs – with a population of around 30,000 people – has a quarter-mile dragstrip just a few minutes from the town centre. Alice Springs Inland Dragway is right next to the airport, which is the perfect spot to put it because then people can't whinge about the noise from the drags – you can't hear them over the roar of the jet engines. Sure, there's only a couple of flights a day that come in, but that's beside the point.

While the facilities aren't quite up to the standards of Willowbank, Sydney or Kwinana – you've got to walk a few hundred metres to take a leak – they've just been given another $1.1 million to upgrade the track to allow Top Alcohol and Doorslammers to run. By the time you read this, the whole track will have been resurfaced, and they'll be raising the walls and adding a sand trap to the run-off area.

I was surprised to hear that the regular drag racing events don't draw much of a crowd; maybe the fact that it's so accessible means people take it for granted. But when Red CentreNATS came to town, it seemed the entire population of Alice Springs were at the strip. The spectator mound was standing room only, and the crowd was treated to some great drag racing action. The track prep was top-notch, too, with plenty of people lifting the fronts, and if there was an oil-down or any wet stuff on the track, they were on it right away.

There was some great racing between Serge and David Bonetti, both piloting '32 coupes. Serge's big block-powered three-window always edged out the five-window of nephew David, but then David was running a

29: Steven Schultz's TYRE FKR VK was set to destroy tyres and run some numbers on the dragstrip, but a shagged ignition system put paid to those plans. The PPG 'Oh So Sexy' candy red sure would have looked great on the pad. There's always next year

30: There were some pretty serious comp cars that showed up to race, none prettier than Daniel Franklin's Capri

31: The recipient of the Chief's Choice Award, Duncan McKinstray's '34 Chev, didn't just look pretty at the show 'n' shine, it did a pretty good skid and was no slouch, clocking a best ET of 11.139 at over 120mph!

32: We really wanted John Ross's '83 Monte Carlo to do well, simply because it looked so bad arse, but it appeared that the wet and slippery stuff in the engine kept trying to get out and it only made a couple of passes

33: Nick Sideris sometimes got confused between the burnout pad and burnout box. Wherever the car was, there was plenty of smoke, but the 10.208 and 131mph trap speeds proved it's not just for killing tyres. It's run quicker in Adelaide and is powered by a single-turbo LS combo

THEY'VE JUST BEEN GIVEN ANOTHER $1.1 MILLION TO UPGRADE THE TRACK TO ALLOW TOP ALCOHOL AND DOORSLAMMERS

small-block and a full exhaust. Of course, it didn't really matter because Serge built the engine in both cars. "The big-block has been in the car for 29 years and it's all old technology, but David's small-block is all new stuff," Serge said. Both cars were running in the low 10s all weekend, but each has run a best of 9.93 in the past. Putting the H-O-T back in hot rods, for sure!

If there was an award for Most Staunch Performance Overall, it would surely have gone to Peter Traumanis. Not only did he drive his HBD Commodore from Drouin, Victoria all the way to Alice – almost 2400km – he also won the dyno competition with 608hp at the wheels, as well as doing lap after lap on the strip, running in the low 11s. Those times would have been even better if he wasn't racing on the same tyres he drove up on!

He wasn't the only one multi-tasking at the Red CentreNATS. Nick Sideris cruised, raced and competed in the burnouts with his turbo-LS VH Commodore, and Steve MacGregor's stunning HZ Premier cruised and raced all weekend too, even getting a little daylight under the front tyres from his Powerhouse Engines-built 383 Holden stroker. Another HZ that impressed was Matt Lampard's LUMPER. It also saw triple-duty on the street, strip and pad, and put on a great show thanks to another LS conversion.

There was no shortage of racing, with all of Saturday afternoon put aside for qualifying, and you could easily get six or eight runs in. It got serious on Sunday, with the field split into a Competition class and a Street class.

In the Comp class it was no surprise that Tim Bryan took home the bacon

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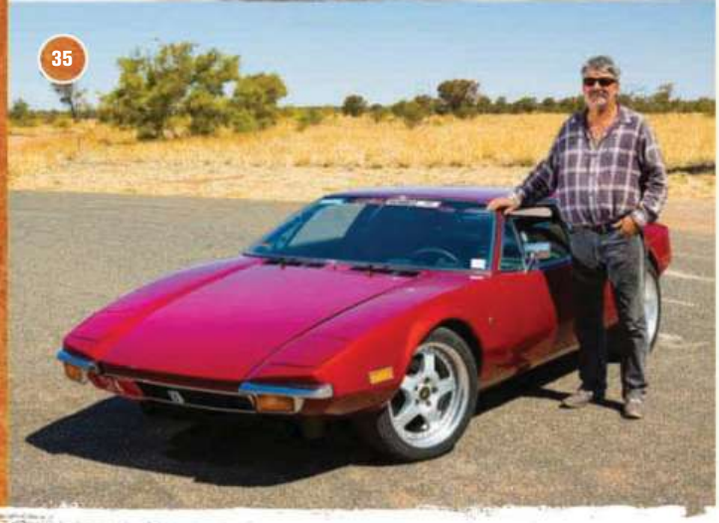
with his XW GT. Looking more like a refugee from Alan Moffat's glory days on the Mountain (that's him on the bottom of page 84) – with fat rubber front and rear, Minilite rims and racing numbers – it was on the money all weekend, with consistent ETs and great reaction times.

When it came to the street class, it was the mild-looking 2002 Monaro of Peter Karayannis that took home the gold. Sporting an under-bonnet blower, it was deceptively quick and cut through the field with clean launches and running right on the dial-in.

Hopefully with the upgrades to the track there will be some more room for spectators, and in the pits, as I'm pretty sure the crowd attendance records set this year will get smashed in 2016!

34



35

34: It might be a bit unorthodox these days, but Serge Bonetti's three-wheeled launches seem to work. Consistent low-10s from this killer hot rod

35: Peter Bamford's '71 Pantera has had the original 351 Clevo that came with the car punched out to 408 cubes, and filled with KB pistons, a solid cam and 650DP carb. The car was running mid-12s all day, and considering it was the first time he had ever drag-raced any car, it was a pretty good effort!

PRETTY SURE THAT CROWD ATTENDANCE RECORDS SET THIS YEAR WILL GET SMASHED IN 2016!

BELOW: Rob Taylor brought his super-clean LJ up from Melbourne

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STORY DAVE CAREY PHOTOS MATTHEW HOWELL

COULD THIS BE THE WORLD'S MOST BEAUTIFUL MORRIS MINOR? SALLY AND JOHN PHILLIPS THOUGHT IT COULD BE, AND MADE IT HAPPEN AGAINST ALL ODDS

MINOR THREAT

Of the epic custom fadeaways, Sally explains: "John had been talking about putting fadeaways on a Minor for ages, so we came up with some concept pictures. He asked me what I thought of it and I knew it would look great." As for how they were created, if there's a will, there's a way. "We got out there and bent the steel around the light post out the front," Sally giggles. "The neighbours must think we're idiots!"

IN 1950, Californian girl Marcia Campbell took delivery of a customised but unfinished 1942 Ford coupe. She tasked Sam Barris with finishing it, specifying dark blue duco, a '49 Olds grille, five-inch chop and lengthened doors and quarters.

Similarly, Barris bodyman Bill Ortega treated his 1941 Mercury to a severe chop, relocated fuel filler, smoothed nose and deck, and full fadeaway fenders down either side.

Sixty-five years and 5390 miles away, Sally and John Phillips have painstakingly applied the most awesome traits of these early Californian game-changers to their humble '63 Morris Minor, creating a masterpiece in the process.

Having toiled away together in their windswept carport in darkest Oxfordshire for the past two-and-a-half years, the pair's efforts were rewarded in April when Sally inadvertently debuted the car to the entire world; her Morris Minor had gone Grumpy Cat-levels of viral overnight! And *Street Machine* was taking notice: "Telf saw it and messaged me within a day," Sally says. "He said he didn't normally get excited by Morris Minors, but he loves mine!"

And there's plenty to love; despite diminutive proportions, the Morris oozes a style far removed from the austerity intended by designer Alec Issigonis. Influences and aspects from the best customs throughout history have been seamlessly melded and resized, but Sally is quick to give credit where it's due: "The shape is all John; he's just got an eye for it!"

Not that Sally needs to justify her own input; she was deeply involved in the build and has worshipped classic tin since day dot. "I've always loved cars and owned another Morris before this one, but it was rotten from the middle down." Things came to a head for that Morris when an MOT inspector bashed his screwdriver right through a chassis rail. "We found grey putty, chicken wire and old newspapers!" Sally remembers.

Sally and John sourced another Minor shell via mate Simon Beckett. By Aussie standards it was pretty far gone: a birdbath for a roof and no hanging panels, engine, doors or floors. "But it was solid in the rails; it hadn't been messed around with and the datum points were intact, so we rescued it!" Sally enthuses.

The couple wasted no time, chopping the roof five inches at the front and eight inches at the back, lengthening the rear deck two inches, then re-attaching the roof during a single, busy weekend.

"We also sectioned in the smaller rear window from an earlier Minor," Sally explains. "I can cut and weld, but the more complex tasks were handled by John." He also canted the B-pillars forward and re-shaped the side glass apertures in a style reflecting the famous Hirohata Mercury.

Real estate at home precluded a full rotisserie, but with the amount of rot underneath the car, Sally and John really needed one. After some careful planning, mates Kookie Cooke and Ollie Pratlett were lured to the carport to help John out. Several beers and a bacon sandwich later, they "just gave it the old heave-ho and it was up, leaning on a pile of tyres", according to Sally.

With John beavering away on the floor sections, Sally frenched in a pair of MG Midget headlight surrounds.

But something was amiss. Sally started to feel some weird effects – touch sensation issues, double vision and numbness down her left side. Then, while she was awaiting the results of an MRI, Sally awoke to find half her face had dropped as if she'd had a stroke; the life-changing diagnosis was multiple sclerosis. "John was devastated by the news, but when he's upset he just throws himself at cars," Sally says philosophically. "But I had to put my bits on hold."

Although there's no cure for MS, a definite diagnosis meant treatment could commence. While Sally was offline, John finished the bodywork, stretching the doors and quarters south, nosing the bonnet, decking the bootlid and creating the amazing fadeaways by bending the new sheet metal around the light pole in front of their house!

Within a few months, Sally's medications were keeping her symptoms at a manageable level and they could get stuck back into the Morris together. Nick Farrance had painted the car, so all that was left was

THIS MORRIS OOZES STYLE; INFLUENCES FROM THE BEST CUSTOMS THROUGHOUT HISTORY HAVE BEEN SEAMLESSLY MELDED AND RESIZED

ABOVE: Sally didn't want the front to look too flat, so MG headlight rings were frenched into the standard headlight pods; access to the globes is from behind

INTERIOR: The cool steering wheel is pure Morris Minor with an aftermarket chrome dome. "I didn't want a bullet in case I had to stop suddenly!" Sally explains. We're sensing a theme with the trim and door cards: "I've got leopard-print everything – wallpaper, sheets, shoes. I love it!"

LEFT: The Didcot Power Station can be seen for miles around, but is overshadowed by Sally's awesome custom Morris. John not only extended the wings, doors and sills southward, but relocated the front bumper down 1in and the rear down 1½in for some extra attitude. If you're wondering about the grille, it's a modified Morris Oxford item that retains the neat integrated blinkers

BONNET: "We had to re-shape the bonnet as it originally met the grille," Sally says. "John rounded the edges, too." But there's plenty more; the entire bonnet profile has been 'nosed', with the central hump extended forward and lifted. The four-inch-wide ridge, made famous when Alec Issigonis decided his design was too narrow, has also been deleted

BELOW: Sally's other half John loves his customs, and has a knack for turning raw Pommy metal into super-classy custom creations. Witness his Austin A50 convertible, dubbed the Kopper Kruiser

JOHN CANTED THE B-PILLARS FORWARD AND RE-SHAPED THE SIDE GLASS APERTURES IN THE STYLE OF THE FAMOUS HIROHATA MERCURY

careful re-assembly. Sally fitted the door cards, glass and chrome fixings. "Some of the smallest stuff was the trickiest," she says. "The quarter lights were a nightmare!"

With John a mechanic by trade, motivation was easily sorted; a 1275cc MG Midget engine was given a freshen-up with some good bits including MG Metro inlet and exhaust manifolds and an HIF44 SU carburettor. Although not quite as exciting as a Hemi, it returns a very decent 40mpg – an important factor in England!

Vehicles like Bill Ortega's Mercury business coupe, Marcia Campbell's 1941 Ford and the Hirohata Merc were never famous for horsepower – they were famous for oozing style from every single panel. It's a testament to their legacy that 60 years later, these cars are still spoken about in reverent tones and are still inspiring people like Sally and John to challenge expectations, beat the odds and put out something beautiful.

And we're certain that, in another 60 years, people will still talk of the world's most beautiful Morris Minor.

MORRIS MINOR

ABOVE: The number-plate aperture and bootlid garnishes were relegated to the skip, the rear fenders and skirts were lengthened and the tail-lights replaced by E-Type Jaguar side marker lights. The US-style relocated number plate sits in a mount made from Morris over-riders and a pair of shelf brackets!

SALLY PHILLIPS
1963 MORRIS MINOR

Colour: Gloss black two-pack

GRUNT

Engine: 1275cc MG Midget
Intake: MG Metro
Induction: Single HIF44 SU carburettor
Ignition: Lucas sport coil with 44D4 distributor
Exhaust: MG Metro manifold and downpipe with mufflers homemade from disposable CO_2 cylinders

SHIFT

Transmission: Standard
Diff: 9in Detroit Locker with Strange 4.11s. Not really, Riley 3.7:1 diff

BENEATH

Brakes: Morris Marina (f), standard drums (r)
Springs & shocks: Adjusted two-spline torsions bars with rebuilt lever-arm shocks (f), 2in lowering blocks with Monroe telescopic shocks (r)
Steering: Standard rack-and-peanut

ROLLING

Rims: Standard steelies, 14x3.5 (f); standard commercial-spec steelies, 14x4.5 (r)
Rubber: Bridgestone; 145/80R14 (f), 165/70R14 (r)

INTERIOR

Steering wheel: Standard Morris with chrome dome bullet
Seats: Rover Metro (f), standard bench (r); both retrimmed in leopard print
Gauges: Smiths
Shifter: Custom-painted Herman Munster head
Stereo: Mutant with Kenwood speakers hidden behind 1970s poker machine covers

THANKS

Nick Farrance for the paint job; Phil & Deborah Rowles for the awesome interior; Max Davies for various bits including the carburettor; Kristian 'Kookie' Cooke & Ollie Pratlett for helping roll the shell over during the build; Simon Beckett for sourcing the car; Alan Bone and Robbie for their general help and support

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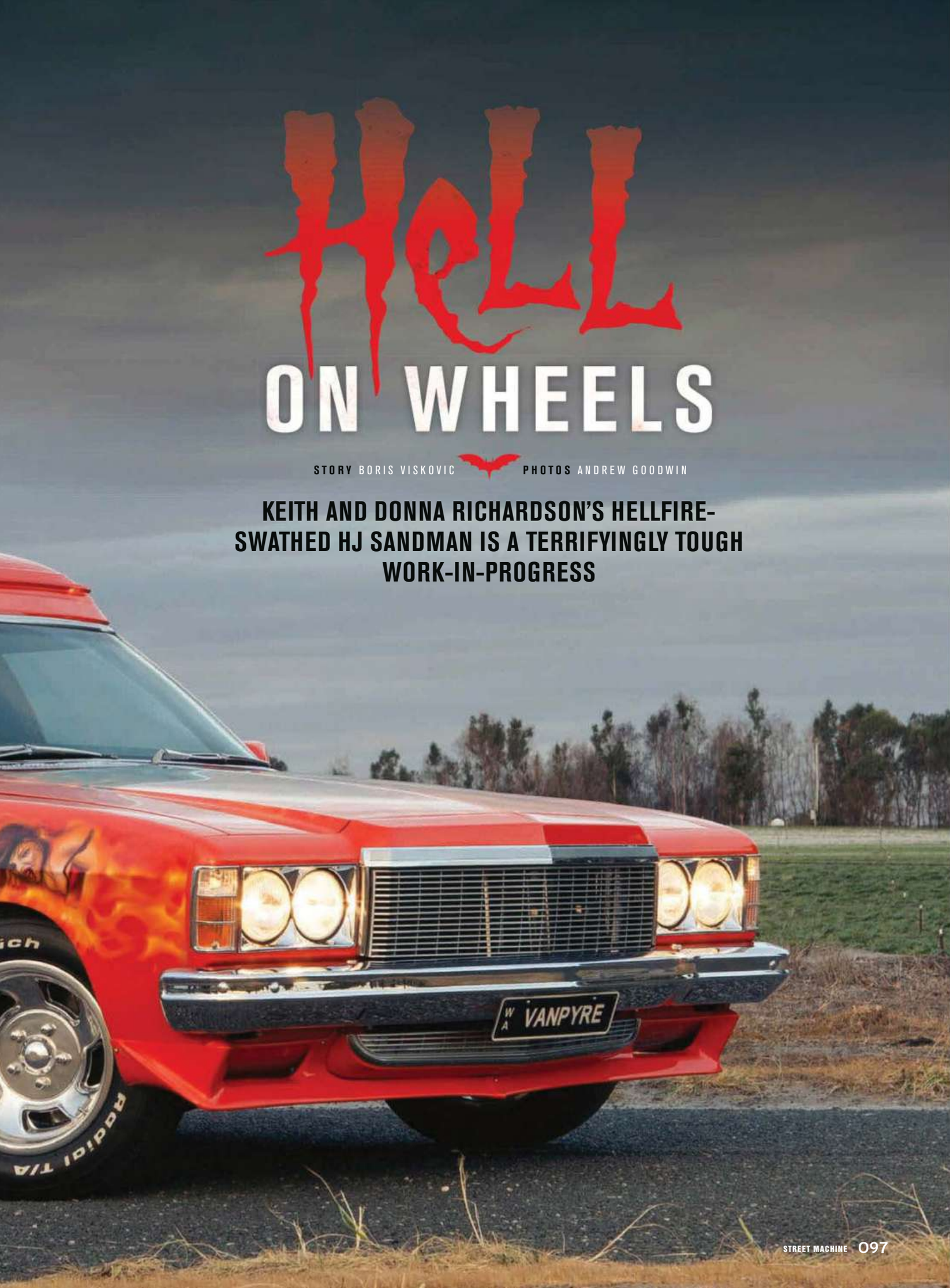
KEITH AND DONNA RICHARDSON'S HELLFIRE-SWATHED HJ SANDMAN IS A TERRIFYINGLY TOUGH WORK-IN-PROGRESS



LIKE all great panel vans, Donna and Keith Richardson's VANPYRE is in a constant state of evolution. Purchased a few years ago as a genuine HJ Sandman in need of some TLC, Keith and Donna soon had it looking much like it did when it left the factory – but it wasn't going to stay that way for long.

"I was a panel vanner back in the day, when I was 18, 19 – until I got married," Keith says. "Then the house came along, then kids, then divorce, then back into cars again." Only this time around he was joined by Donna, a lady who's as much, if not more, into cars as Keith himself.

"We bought it about seven years ago," Keith says. "I probably drove it for a week, then went away to Bathurst for the race and when I came back that was it – I started pulling it all apart. I thought I'd be able to finish it all in six months – three years later it was on the road, but it's still not finished.

"I did all the chassis and fitted the motor and driveline while it was a rolling chassis," he continues. "Then when the van came back from the painters we just dropped the body on. We just cleaned it up a little bit – it was never intended to be a show car; it's still not, really."

Three years to build a car doesn't sound like a long time to us, but clearly Keith doesn't like to stand around doing stuff-all. "I rang up to get it sodablasted, but there was a three-month wait, so I went and bought my own sodablaster and did it all myself. Even Donna was inside the back of the van sodablasting.

"Then I had to wait six months until I could get it into Des Seery up in Chittering to get all the rust cut out. He did all the rust repairs and panel work; then Bowra Panel & Paint in Osborne Park did the original paint."

The car was finished in the original Mandarin Red, but the evolution to full custom panel van didn't take long to kick in. It started off with some murals by Sam Hawkins at Awesam Paint Works – just a couple initially, on the bonnet and tailgate. Then Donna and Keith decided to step it up a bit and handed the car over to Jamie Collier at Creative Works. "I just gave him the car and asked him to put certain things in it and said it was up to him to design," Keith says. What you see on the van now took several visits to finish off, with the murals growing and extending to cover most of the bodywork. Once it was all done, a coat of House Of Kolor clear locked it all in.

The most recent addition is the custom interior in the van's party section. In the initial build it was a pretty low-key black affair with some piping – nicely done, understated and simple. But that's not what people expect to see when they look in the back of a custom panel van; they want mirrors and neon lights and buttons, lots of buttons – so that's what Keith gave 'em. "Everyone said the back was boring, so I took it to World Custom Trim. They said it was a big challenge, but they enjoyed doing it because it wasn't something they'd normally do. I just said I want some orange in there, some black, I want the archway, some hidden lights, and that's what they came up with.

KEITH & DONNA RICHARDSON 1975 HOLDEN HJ SANDMAN

Paint: Mandarin Red with murals

DONK

Type: 383 Chevrolet
Inlet: Edelbrock Air-Gap
Carb: Holley 750DP
Crank: Scat
Conrods: Scat
Radiator: PWR
Exhaust: Twin 2.5in, Pacemaker extractors
Ignition: ICE

SHIFT

Box: Turbo 400, stage 2 shift kit
Converter: 2500rpm stall
Diff: Salisbury 10-bolt, KAAZ LSD centre, 3.55 gears

BENEATH

Front end: Lowered until it looks good
Shocks: Bilstein
Steering: Power-assisted
Brakes: Hoppers Stoppers discs (f & r)

ROLLING STOCK

Rims: Halibrand Sweet Swirl; 15x8 (f), 15x8.5 (r)
Rubber: BF Goodrich T/A; 225/60/15 (f), 255/60/15 (r)

I THOUGHT I'D BE ABLE TO FINISH IT ALL IN SIX MONTHS – THREE YEARS LATER IT WAS ON THE ROAD, BUT IT'S STILL NOT FINISHED

1) The stroker 383 Chevy has no problem getting the van rocking thanks to AFR heads, Edelbrock Air-Gap intake and a 750DP Holley. The Scat forged internals ensure everything hangs together

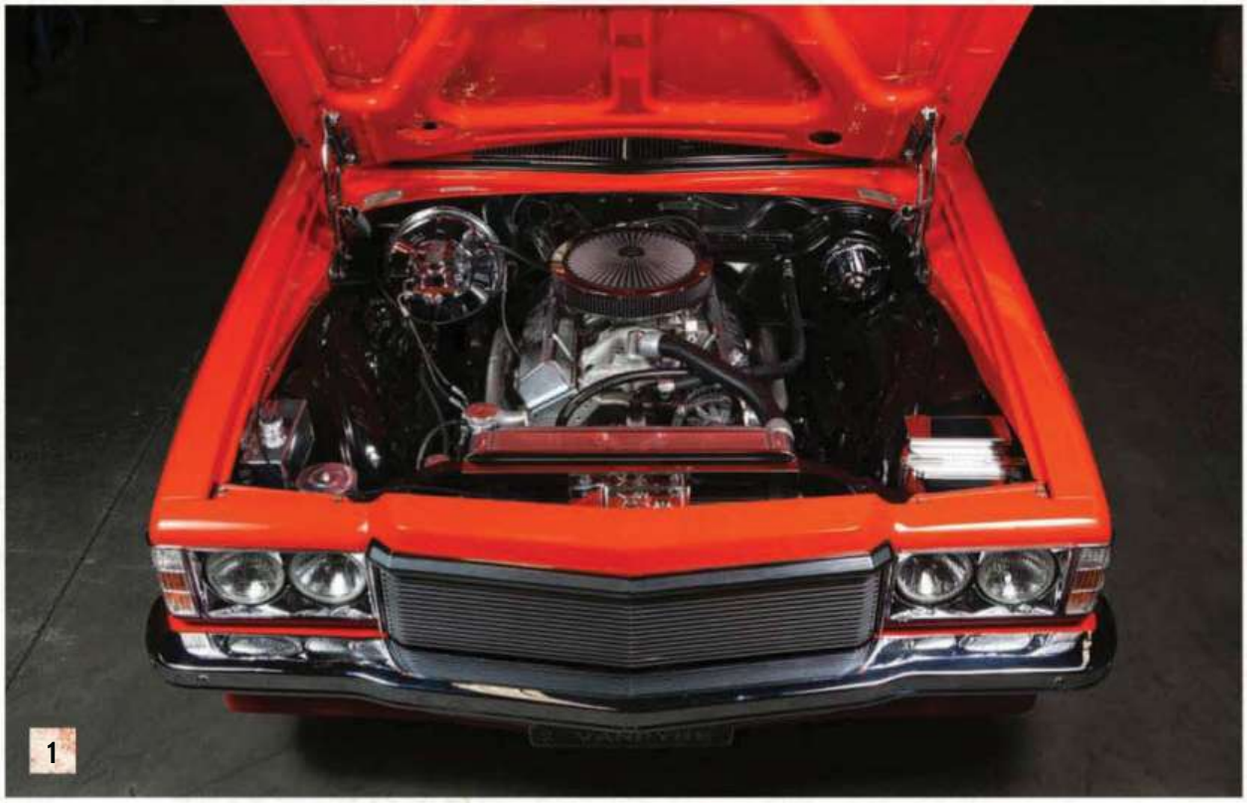
2) The custom rocker covers were engraved with the VANPYRE logo after being milled from a solid chunk of billet by Bliss Custom Machining

3) The dash looks pretty original, but all of the gauges are custom-built and light up from behind, similar to a VE GTS. The fascia has been vinyl-wrapped in a custom skull print for some extra creepiness

4) The murals have evolved over time, from small pieces on the bonnet and tailgate to the full covering the van now has. Vampires, werewolves, skulls and true fire – all the stuff that gave you nightmares as a kid!

5) The murals are the work of Jamie Collier from Creative Works. Donna and Keith gave him an idea of what elements to include and he just ran with it

6) The front interior is pretty low-key (for now) with its black seats, silver piping and embroidered logo, but it will all be changed shortly to tie in with the revamped rear section



"They far outdid what I was expecting. At night it looks mint with it all lit up, so now we have to do the front because we ran out of time before the Van Nats *[in April 2015]*. It's all plain black at the moment, but we're going to tie it in with some orange on the seats and door panels and change it up a bit."

And the evolution will continue, with more changes in the works for the engine bay and underneath: "We're putting a new motor in it – a 427 small-block Chev – so while the engine is out Jamie is painting murals on the inner guards. We're having some very naked ladies put on them. And because we always got pinged for having gloss black inner guards and a satin black firewall, we've painted the firewall gloss."

The wheels have gone through some evolutionary steps as well, with GTS rims and Dragways doing duty on the car for a while. The latest additions are the Halibrand Sweet Swirls you see here, measuring up at 15x8 and 15x8.5 and wrapped in 225/60 and 255/60 BFG Radial T/As – with the white writing on the outside of course!

And the final touch – for now – will be a Jag rear end, "just because they look good", according to Keith. Can't argue with that. With all those changes on the cards, the next time you see VANPYRE it will look even wilder, and who knows, Keith and Donna might even crack a spot in the Top 10 at the next Van Nats.

HELL ON WHEELS

THANKS

Donna for all her hard work, organising parts and paying all the bills – I couldn't wish for a better wife and best friend

ABOVE: Finished just prior to the Van Nats earlier this year, the rear of the van has had a complete makeover. Once again, Donna and Keith suggested a few things they wanted and then the team at World Custom Trim went to town

WHILE THE ENGINE IS OUT JAMIE WILL BE PAINTING MURALS ON THE INNER GUARDS. WE'RE HAVING SOME VERY NAKED LADIES PUT ON THEM

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Bryant Goldstone was keeping it real with his Javelin. It's all steel and weighs in around 3600lb; even the bumpers are steel. Up front it's packing a 572ci big-block Chev with twin Pro Mod 88mm turbos, and it won the Ultimate Iron category with an average of 6.95@208mph

HELL

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WEEK

THE AMERICAN MIDWEST. THIS IS DRAG WEEK – WELCOME TO HELL!

YOU'VE read the stories and you've seen the videos, but nothing can prepare you for the torture test that is *Hot Rod* Drag Week. It's five days of racing, cruising and wrenching on some of the toughest street machines on the planet; it's not for those who enjoy their sleep. Seriously, if you're even contemplating transporting a car to this week-long mechanical marathon, make sure you come over and check it out first.

A few Aussies have made a name for themselves at Drag Week over the past decade, but this year there were more than ever. Whether they were entrants, crew members or just spectators, Aussies were everywhere, and the big news was that five Australian teams were taking a crack at Drag Week 2015: John Faraone in the silver Charger; the orange Capri of Arby and Steve Reimann; Greg and Geoff Trapnell's purple Monaro; Brian and Dianne Jensen in the white Torana; and Harry Haig and the boys in their orange Chevelle.

John Faraone needs no introduction. He owns what is probably the quickest Mopar street car on the planet; we even featured his Charger on the cover of our December 2013 issue. The Americans just love to see that "Ossy Charger" roar down the quarter. This was John's fourth go at Drag Week, and this year he brought his mate Gary Hazell along for the ride.

Mark Arblaster and Steve Reimann are also old hands at Drag Week; Mark's had three goes at it and Steve has completed the event an impressive seven times. They came second in their class with the 408ci Cleveland-powered Capri last year, and were looking to improve on that performance this time around.

Brian and Dianne Jensen aren't exactly Drag Week newcomers; they've been spectators at both the 2013 and 2014 events. They wanted to know exactly what they were in for before they brought their nine-second big-block Torana over for a blast this year. They were joined by good mate Nathan Pittard.

Fellow Queenslanders Greg and Geoff Trapnell, along with their mate Adrian Wilkinson, decided to have a crack with their wild wheelstanding Monaro. The major difference between them and just about everyone else at Drag Week was that the Trapnells were running mechanical injection, along with E85 and nitrous. If you're planning on doing Drag Week, this was probably the worst combination possible – it was either going to be awesome, or an epic failure.

The last Aussie team was Harry Haig, Shannon Jennings and Brett Ford, who were supposed to be using Steve Reimann's '63 Dodge sedan. The big white whale has done Drag Week a number of times and is no slouch with a 500ci big-block up front. It was proven and reliable – and therefore way too boring, the boys decided. "The Dodge was too safe," Harry said. "There was no chance that it wasn't going to make it."

Instead, the boys located the nearest big-block four-speed hunk of junk they could find and got it running. They found an old Chevelle SS 396 sitting behind The Car Shop in Independence, Kansas, where Arby and Steve usually leave their cars. The Chevelle had been sitting there for 20 years, ever since a customer hadn't paid his bill. With a big-block under the bonnet and a four-speed stick shift the car certainly had potential, but on the negative side of the equation rats had been living in the interior for years and the smell was horrific. "The rat shit was this deep," Harry said, holding his hand up at an unbelievable level. "We had to shovel it out, and then we scrubbed and hosed the rest out."

The rats had also taken a liking to the wiring, so they had to install a three-way switch for the indicators, and added two push buttons – one for the starter and another for the horn, which was a Drag Week requirement. They also needed additional switches for the headlights, tail-lights and new wiring for the brake lights. With a bit of help from Arby and Steve, the guys did some junkyard scrounging to find a pair of half-decent Corolla seats for the front,

THE BOYS FOUND AN OLD CHEVELLE SS 396 BEHIND THE CAR SHOP IN

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John Faraone has done Drag Week four times now with his twin-turbo Charger, but this year was probably the toughest yet. The importers lost a vital piece of paper that kept the car held up in US customs for a couple of weeks, and then the trucking company misplaced the car for a few days. Unfortunately a broken throttlebody shaft put John out of competition on Day Three

INDEPENDENCE, KANSAS – IT HAD BEEN SITTING THERE FOR 20 YEARS

and a rear bench from a Chevelle sedan, which they vinyl-sprayed black. The brakes were rebuilt with a new master cylinder, rotors, wheel bearing and rubber lines, but all the original ball joints and bushes remained.

Naturally the Americans lost their minds when they found out about the crazy Aussies and their Chevelle, and it didn't take long before the old muscle car was getting more internet traffic than Kim Kardashian's butt.

"I've got to thank Steve and Arby for the invite, and Dale and Marsha Wilkins from The Car Shop," Harry said. "We couldn't have done any of this without their help. I should give a shout-out to the team at *Hot Rod* too, for putting us on the waiting list. They run an awesome show."

Our first look at Drag Week was at scrutineering, which was an all-day affair on the NASCAR oval at Gateway Motorsports Park in Madison, Illinois.

We got in early to check out some of the cool rides, and there were plenty to see. Wagons were big this year, as were LS engines and turbos. If you had all three in the same package, then you were winning at life.

Sunday night provided racers with the opportunity for some practice runs, and all the Aussies had a crack. The Capri ran a 10.37@133mph and the Charger belted out an 8.01@181mph, while the Torana and Monaro both ran mid-nines at 142mph and the Chevelle crawled down the strip at a snail-like 15.2@92mph.

DAY ONE

MONDAY morning it was time to race, and after the drivers' briefing it didn't take long before the pits and staging lanes rumbled to the tune of 300 high-powered engines. The Americans didn't stuff around; within five minutes Frank Saponaro's Nova wagon was first in the sevens with a 7.85@183mph, and then Jeff Lutz came out and ran a 6.05@251mph with his Pro Mod-style Camaro.

John Faraone was first out for the Aussies, but the car didn't sound right in the burnout. "I almost didn't run because it wouldn't rev over 4000rpm; it was the bloody two-step!" he said.

Then the Capri came out and limped down the track as well, also with two-step limiter issues. Things weren't looking good for the Aussie crew, and then Brian in his Torana ran a 9.56@143mph to turn things around. Harry flat-shifted the Chevelle to a 14.2@97mph to everyone's surprise, while the Monaro was quickly nicknamed 'Tripod' after it hoisted the left-hand front wheel to run a 9.78@141mph naturally aspirated. Arby and Steve fixed the Capri and ran a 10.79@133mph before hitting the road, and then John came back out with the Charger. The heavyweight Mopar smoked the tyres, and John had to pedal it before he found traction and opened the taps again to run another 8.01@181mph. With the event already two hours behind schedule and the pits and staging lanes looking very empty, it was as good a time as any to hit the road towards Indianapolis.

The racers were locked into a 266-mile road course that they had to follow to the mile, while we decided to shortcut the process and hit the interstate. That's where we learned our first lesson about Drag Week: All the interesting stuff happens on the drive.

1: All the way down from Alberta, Canada, Matt Blasco's '72 Dodge Dart was one to watch. With 572 cubes and twin 91mm turbos, it was making 1970hp at the treads. It finished Drag Week, but a blown transmission and a slow time at Cordova held it back. Still, a 7.70@184mph at Indy shows its potential

2: Yes, that's an LS engine in a Mustang, but more interesting is the positioning of the twin turbos. The radiator is lying under the turbos at a shallow angle, but it seems to work because Pete Johnson completed the five-day challenge with an average of 8.56@162mph

3: It wasn't pretty, but Paul Nichols's rusty '55 Chevy Nomad was practical; he slept in the back all week. The shoebox Chev ran mid-13s all week and drove all the way to and from Columbus, Ohio

4: George Gallimore's big, black and beautiful Monte Carlo is a beast. It weighs over 4000lb, but boogied down the quarter-mile in 7.64sec at over 190mph at Gateway Motorsports Park

5: You may know Tina Pearce from the popular Discovery Channel show *Street Outlaws*. Tina had her new '08 Chev Colorado out for a play. It struggled with boost issues all week but still managed to run a mid-eight at 168mph

6: What price can you put on fun? Harry, Brett and Pyro had a blast with the Chevelle, and it cost under $5000 all up to buy and build the car. Best run? How does 14.02@100mph sound?

HELL WEEK

DAY TWO

IT WASN'T until the next morning that we discovered the Chevelle had sheared all the bolts off the ring gear in the 10-bolt diff, and the guys had spent the rest of the night helping Jeff Lutz rebuild his Camaro's engine in a parking lot, and we do mean rebuild – they had the crank, rods and pistons out of it. The Capri had a fuel pump failure, which saw them strap a 10-litre jerry can to the bonnet and run a hose down to the carby to get them to the track. The Trapnells were also struggling with fuel issues, with the Monaro using 70 litres of E85 every 80 miles – that's about 5.2mpg. The Torana was even worse, with the economy somewhere in the 2mpg range. We travelled behind both of them for a little while and can verify how rich both cars were running; you could have run a fleet of Camrys with what was coming out of the pipes.

At Lucas Oil Raceway in Indianapolis, the white Torana was the first of the Aussies to face the tree, and it belched black smoke all the way down the track for a 10.71@140mph. Next out was the purple Monaro, and with the nitrous purging as it crept to the line we were expecting to see something amazing, but the two-door coupe stumbled and loped through the traps for a 12-second pass.

Then it was Faraone's turn and it was fantastic to finally see the Charger hook up, launch hard and run a 7.49@189mph. "We bumped the boost up from 18 to 22 pounds," John said. "We'll try and bump it up a little more later in the week."

The Monaro came back for another pass and ran much better with a 9.78@141mph, but the engine's top end sounded very noisy.

The Chevelle was quickly developing into the story of the week and the Drag Week YouTube live feed was full of the boys' antics. The oxy-softened springs failed sometime during the night and the boys had scored a pair of standard springs from somewhere, but with the new suspension the Chevelle was axle-tramping like an old Holden. Harry tried his best to break an axle in the burnout box before rolling to the line and ripping off a 14.0@99mph. The announcers were predicting 13-second passes by the end of Drag Week!

Then the Capri went 10.60 with a new fuel pump to complete the Aussie contingent's runs for Day Two.

It was time to hit the road again, this time to Great Lakes Dragway in Wisconsin; another 250-mile jaunt through the American Midwest

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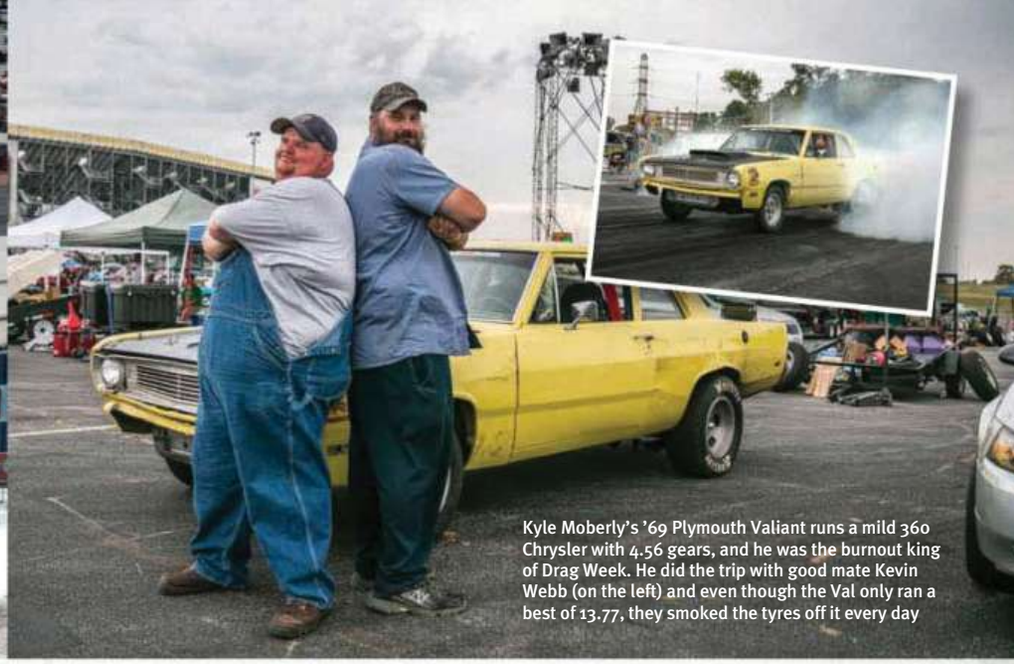

Kyle Moberly's '69 Plymouth Valiant runs a mild 360 Chrysler with 4.56 gears, and he was the burnout king of Drag Week. He did the trip with good mate Kevin Webb (on the left) and even though the Val only ran a best of 13.77, they smoked the tyres off it every day

that would see us heading west and then north, skimming the outskirts of Chicago. This was the America that we've seen on television, with immaculately prepared lawns, two-storey weatherboard houses and the Stars and Stripes hanging from every front porch – small Midwest towns like Crawfordsville, Attica and Manteno.

We caught up with a very happy John Faraone in a service station in Crawfordsville, where the attendant asked if we'd driven all the way from Australia. True story!

"It's a little warm at the moment," John said, "but it's going well. We had Keith Engling from Skinny Kid Race Cars sort some stuff with the rear end and it's launching straight now. Last year it kept trying to put me in the wall."

Tom Bailey was also pulled up at the pump with his crazy Pro Mod Camaro. With Larry Larson not racing this year, Bailey was the only real challenge for the Jeff Lutz steamtrain that looked ready to roll over the competition. We stood there and watched as locals rolled into the parking lot, mouths agape, to stare at the low-slung machine. "They drove this? I ain't ever seen a car like that before!" one of the locals quipped. Then they saw John's Charger: "What the hell is that?"

Down the road Harry, Pyro and Brett were sitting on the sidewalk eating pizza and wings while sucking down some beverages. "Grab some pizza, boys," they said. We did, and it was some of the best pizza we've ever had.

Then we were back on the road to beat the pack to Attica, where the day's next checkpoint was located. The Capri rolled through with Arby and Steve, and they took a quick snap before hitting the road again – there were many miles still to go and daylight is a valuable commodity during Drag Week.

Then Harry and the boys rolled in and news wasn't great; there was a massive driveline vibration and they reckoned it was time to change the front yoke and universal joint. A quick word to a workshop next to the checkpoint secured a hoist (or 'lift' as they call them in the US) for just half an hour. The boys wasted no time getting the Chevelle up on the hoist and removing the tailshaft, and you could see the problem straight away. The yoke had a massive groove worn into it, so they got the shaft up on the bench for removal. But the guys were already exhausted, and you could see that as they fumbled around with a job that should take 10 minutes tops. Thirty-something minutes later the Chevelle came back down and they were ready to hit the road again.

We headed back outside in time to see the Torana and Monaro roll through the checkpoint; we assumed we missed the Charger while the Chevelle crew were in the workshop. It wasn't until the next day we learnt that John was back down the road in Crawfordsville with a broken throttlebody shaft. He had a spare, but it was missing a welded-on extension to make it work. Eventually he built a throttlebody using pieces of the two units, but not in time to make the next track.

7: Arby and Steve struggled with fuel pump, fuel tank and starter issues this year, but averaged mid-10s for the week. They reckon this was the last year for the Capri, and it'll be heading back to Australia soon

8: Tom McGilton's 2013 Camaro may look mostly factory on the outside, but it's got a twin-turbo big-block up front, and ran high sevens on the quarter to win the Pro Street Power Adder class

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Our favourite car of Drag Week was Frank Saponaro's '67 Nova wagon. Rather than go the LS route, Frank has bolted a twin-turbo 540ci big-block up front. He did Drag Week on the same set of tyres and scored Quickest Without A Trailer, after reeling off high sevens at every track

DAY THREE

GREAT Lakes Raceway is one of the oldest operating tracks in the US. They run drag meetings six days, or nights, a week, and when we cruised in we wondered if we didn't have the wrong track. There were literally thousands of people there. It was an amazing sight considering we'd just been to Gateway and Indianapolis, two A-grade facilities that run NHRA meetings but had a quarter of the crowd. We asked Wes Allison from *Hot Rod* if he'd ever seen anything like it and he said: "Not on Drag Week. This is nuts; doesn't anyone work around here?"

The Capri was first out this time and despite the boys having to deal with a dirty needle and seat the little orange Ford reeled off a 10.30@132mph. They backed that up with a 10.33 and started packing the car for the short haul across to Cordova. The plan was to get to the hotel before dark.

In the pits the Trapnells had the Monaro up on four jack stands and the transmission out while they replaced the flexplate. They had already replaced some roller lifters; Greg showed one to me. It was rooted, and the cam was just as bad. Of course it wasn't just a standard-style cam either. The rollerised cam bearings meant that getting another camshaft wasn't going to be easy.

The Torana looked like a diesel going down the track as Brian tried to clear the pipes, and it rolled through for a 12.69, but the Chevelle went through for its quickest pass yet. With two lugs broken off the gearbox, Harry babied it off the line and the slipping clutch helped soften the blow, but the Chevelle still managed a 14.02@100mph. There was much rejoicing in the pits and a local came up to tell them he had a gearbox at home they could have.

The Torana rolled up for another pass and ripped off a 9.66@140mph, and then they found a guy who was willing to lend them a 1050 Dominator for the rest of the week to help cure their fuel consumption issues.

Then the Monaro rolled in to stage for a pass. The launch was ugly and Geoff watched it go down the track just shaking his head; it went through for an 11.57@136mph. Greg struggled to get the Monaro off the line with the transbrake a few more times before deciding to footbrake the launch, and ran a soft 10.07@147mph.

That made it four Aussies down the track, but the Charger was a no-show and word was it wouldn't make it. Bugger!

The hop across to Cordova was short; only 152 miles if you believed the map. Don't believe the map. The instructions were terrible and halfway there we decided to just go with Google Maps. At one point the instructions were almost 40 miles out! But we managed to roll into Sam's Drive-In Diner anyway, and everyone was talking about the poor instructions. It's hard to follow the route to the letter when the route is wrong.

We hung around and had a couple of burgers, which were excellent, and then rolled out again headed for Madison and the next hotel. Even though we had a short haul, we were still exhausted, and after a session of editing video and selecting photos for the daily updates back home we crashed into our respective beds somewhere after midnight.

THE HOP ACROSS TO CORDOVA WAS SHORT; ONLY 152 MILES IF YOU BELIEVED

Jay Brown is a Drag Week veteran; he's done almost every event over the years. His '69 Mustang runs a naturally aspirated 585ci SOHC donk with twin 4bbl throttlebodies and fuel injection. It made 992hp on the dyno and ran into the high eights at four different tracks

Greg and Geoff Trapnell damaged a flexplate on the way to Great Lakes Dragway and had to pull the transmission out. They got it all back together in time to make a couple of passes, but the cam was chewing up lifters like they were jelly beans

THE MAP. DON'T BELIEVE THE MAP – THE INSTRUCTIONS WERE TERRIBLE

DAY FOUR

THE next morning the weather was fairly cool compared to the rest of the trip, and they were talking rain later in the day. There was a change in the competitors. Early in the week they were friendly and approachable, but now they were feeling the pressure and Day Four jitters. They just had to make one pass and then it was a big drive back to Gateway for Day Five.

The track staff were also feeling the pressure, and with nervous looks at the sky they started jamming the cars through the staging lanes as fast as possible. Arby was looking relaxed and wearing his usual laconic grin, all suited up and ready to go. A bloke called out from the fence: "Is that a Mercury Capri?" "You're close," Arby yelled back. "It's a Ford Capri from Australia; it's right-hand drive." The bloke stared at him like he'd grown a second head.

The Americans were fascinated by the Aussie cars. They were used to the Charger and the Capri by now, but the Monaro and the Torana had them stuffed – especially the Torana.

"Is that a Vega?" someone asked Brian for the hundredth time. "Nah mate, it's a Holden Torana," he answered. "Holden? What's that?" We'd seen the same story play out a dozen times over the previous four days. Some called it a Nova, but most called it a Vega. Brian should have had a shirt made up saying: "It's not a bloody Vega!"

On its first pass of the day the Capri took the long way down the track; it took a look at both walls and Arby had to lift. 11.42@102mph was way off the pace. They brought it straight back around and ran 10.53@130mph in the other lane.

Brian ran a 9.73@137mph in the Vega – sorry, Torana – and then Harry missed a few gears in the Chevelle to run a 15.4@88mph, despite its new gearbox. He came back around to run a pair of 14.9s at 96mph and then 98mph, but the old big-block was shedding fan belts like nudists shed clothing at the beach.

Then John Faraone appeared in the Charger. He was officially out of the competition, but they were happy for him to make a pass or two. His first pass went bad, but the second did the trick and with another couple of pounds of boost on board the Charger screamed through for a 7.43@192mph, then destroyed the belt-driven fuel pump at the end of the track.

Then the clouds rolled in fast and dumped a shitload of rain on everyone. At this point we still hadn't seen the Monaro. Were they in? Were they out? We didn't know until later when *Hot Rod*'s David Freiburger posted the results. The Monaro was given an automatic 20-second pass due the rain shortening racing, and lived to play another day.

Rain certainly added another element to the drive. Some guys were driving on tyres that were practically slicks, and with heavy trailers attached it made for a bad combination. We saw at least one car with the quarter dented, and a trailer sitting off to the side of the road. The major players like Tom Bailey, Bryant Goldstone and Joe Barry all pulled over to wait it out. They had all night to make it back to Gateway Motorsports Park, after all.

9: Drive-in diners are a concept that never really took off in Australia. You drive in, park your car, order from your car and they bring the food out to you. The burgers at Sam's were awesome, and it served as a mandatory stop on Day Three, on the way to Cordova. The locals loved the cars rolling through the checkpoint and some had even brought their own rides – like the bloke who rolled in with a 327 Chevy-powered Henry J gasser, complete with open pipes. It's the sort of thing you expect to see at a nostalgia meet, not rolling down the street!

10: Dan Nissen mentioned that his wheelstanding Nova made it into our Dec 2013 issue, so he was chuffed when we pulled out that exact issue and gave it to him. Dan made the drive over from Montana in his big-block C20 pick-up, and ran 14s all week long

11: This little first-generation Civic had Honda's version of a big-block conversion, with a turbo B16 engine up front. The little econobox ran 11.7@120mph and completed the journey

12: You know there has to be at least one Volvo on Drag Week, but we didn't expect anything like Roger Davis's wagon. Powered by a Magnuson-supercharged six-litre, the Swedish breadbox ran 11.77 before it had to pull out

13: Powered by a twin-turbo V10 Viper engine, this Dodge Ram had a unique sound and looked promising on the track, but Dom Vallejos struggled to put the power down, running a best of 9.0@171mph before withdrawing from competition

HELL WEEK

Down the road we found Arby and Steve pulled up with the Capri, with a couple of guys ready to help. It seemed there was a blockage in the tank, and Arby blew back through the feed line to the pump into the full fuel tank. One of the Americans got covered in fuel from the filler, and he wasn't happy, but he was warned.

It wasn't the first or last time they stopped that night. Eventually they pulled the whole fuel tank out and removed the pick-up – the filter sock was collapsing around the pick-up and blocking it.

They weren't the only ones having problems. Brian and Dianne had a front wheel bearing seize up on them in the middle of nowhere, but with Arby and Steve there to lend a hand they found a replacement at an all-night auto parts store. The Monaro's woes continued with more lifter failures, but they made it back to Gateway, where all they needed to do was face the tree to finish.

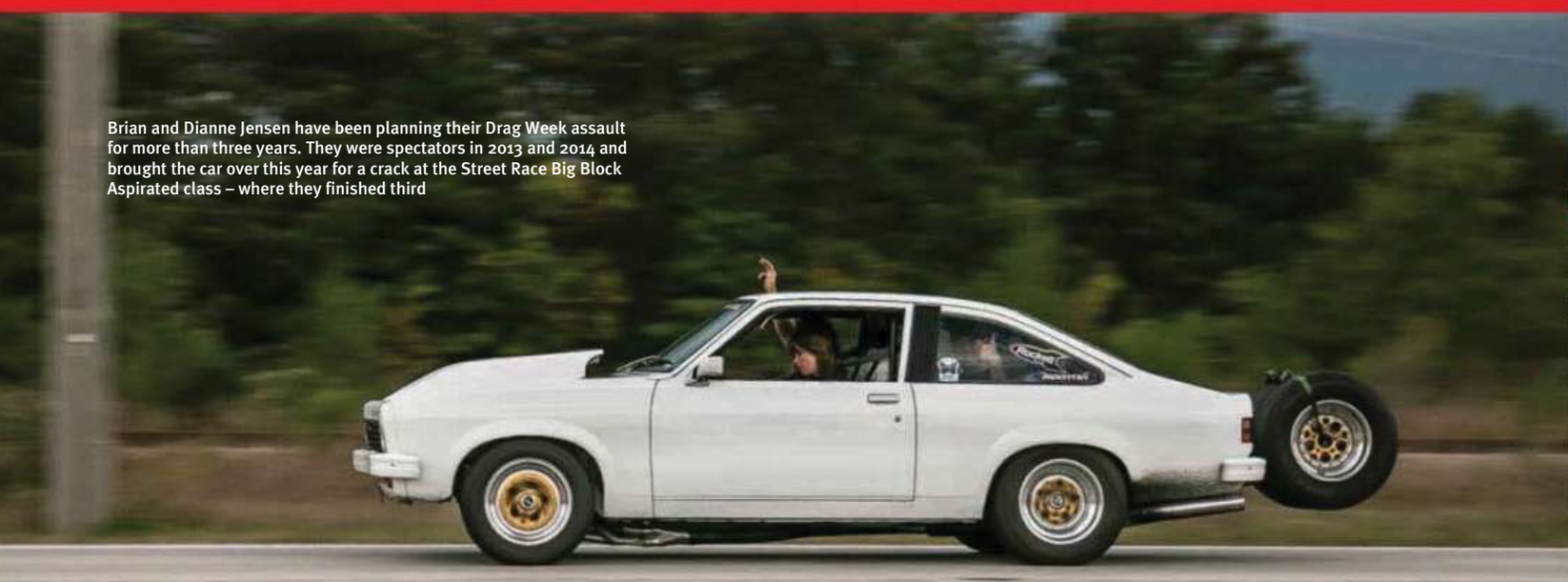
DAY FIVE

WHEN we awoke the next morning the big news was the boys in the Chevelle again, and this time it was for all the wrong reasons. After making their mandatory checkpoints, the boys had ended up on the wrong road, and after losing their instructions they decided to follow the GPS back to Gateway – and that's a big no-no. They blew past the event technical director Keith Turk at 90mph on the interstate, and had to be disqualified for going off route. They weren't alone either – nine cars were disqualified for the same rule infraction that night.

Which left us with three Aussie cars still in the hunt. The Capri was out first, and with Steve behind the wheel it went 10.58@129mph. Then the Torana came out and ran a 9.85@139mph to complete their Drag Week as well. The Monaro didn't sound great when it rolled into the burnout box and we were wondering whether they were just going to stage and take an automatic 20-second pass or just go for it. Silly question. Greg ran it through the gears in the burnout and then purged the nitrous. When the light went green the car stumbled and we thought it was just going to idle down the strip, but then it came to life, lifted the left-hand front and fired down the strip for a 10.70@139mph.

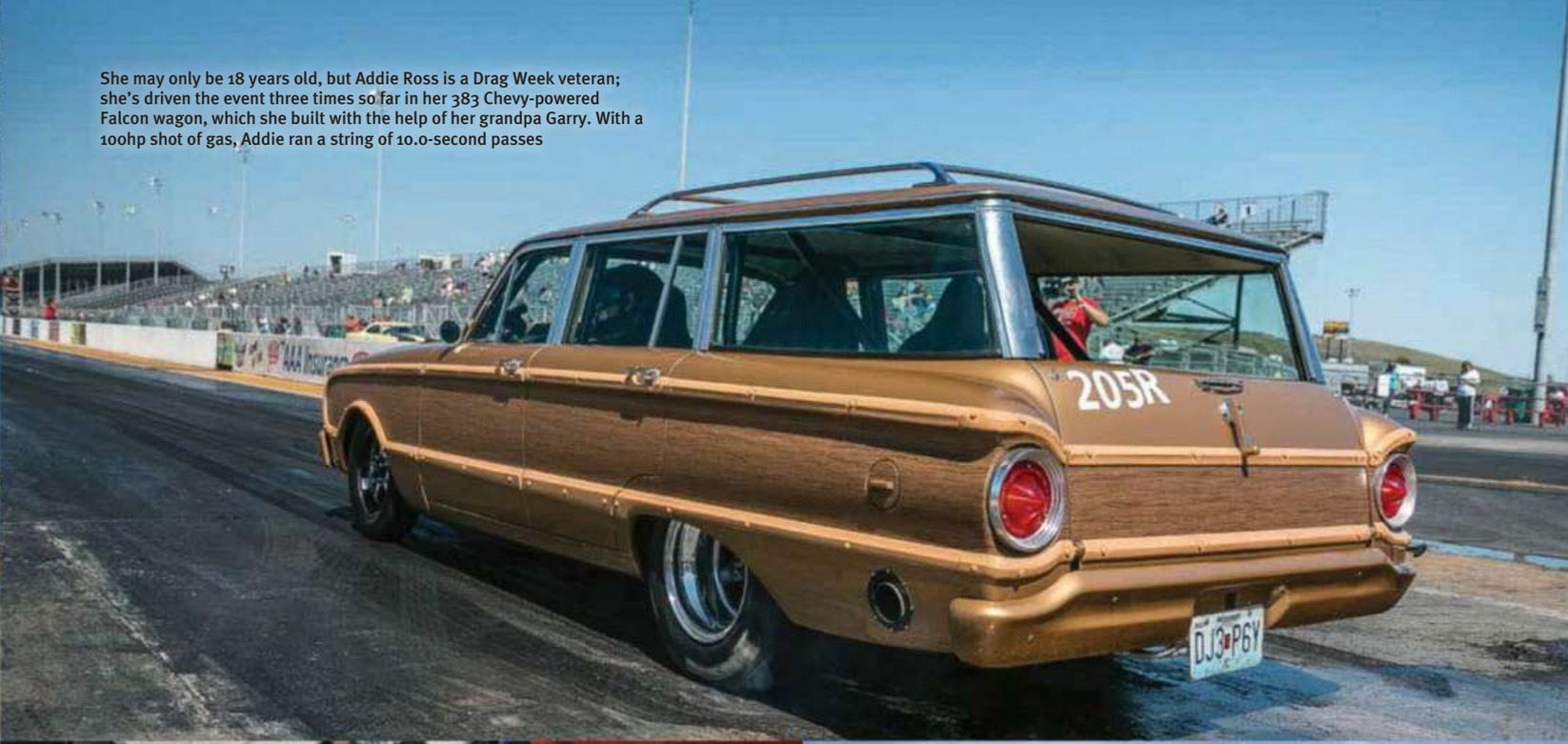
"I can't say we had a lot of fun," Geoff Trapnell said afterwards. "It was a good experience, but I wouldn't do it again. My advice for anyone thinking about bringing a car over is to come over and check it out beforehand, because I've got no way of explaining just how hard it is."

THE BOYS ENDED UP ON THE WRONG ROAD, AND AFTER LOSING THEIR INSTRUCTIONS THEY BLEW PAST THE TECHNICAL DIRECTOR AT 90MPH



Brian and Dianne Jensen have been planning their Drag Week assault for more than three years. They were spectators in 2013 and 2014 and brought the car over this year for a crack at the Street Race Big Block Aspirated class – where they finished third

She may only be 18 years old, but Addie Ross is a Drag Week veteran; she's driven the event three times so far in her 383 Chevy-powered Falcon wagon, which she built with the help of her grandpa Garry. With a 100hp shot of gas, Addie ran a string of 10.0-second passes



Kimmo Nevalainen brought his '65 Corvette all the way from Finland for his honeymoon, planning to take in Drag Week, the Optima Challenge and the Texas Mile. But he had a tough time of it when he blew the rear universals on the halfshafts on his first pass. He persevered and finished the event, despite some close calls with the local fauna

14: A roadside stop in Crawfordsville, Indiana, eating pizza and buffalo wings with Harry and the boys. Midwest America is just how you imagine, with pristine weatherboard houses, American flags hanging off the porch and friendly people

15: Kyle Bemount's '00 Trans Am stood out with its flat blue paint, but what was under the bonnet had everyone talking. The iron-block 408 might be nothing to write home about, but the massive GT55 turbo was certainly noteworthy. Kyle completed Drag Week and then proposed to his girlfriend – she said yes

One of the craziest cars of Drag Week was Canadian Dave Schroeder's '66 Corvette. It runs an 872ci mountain motor with a massive four-stage nitrous system. It ran 7.38 without the nitrous, but didn't make all the tracks. Dave came back on Saturday after the event and ran a 6.96@209mph, his quickest pass to date

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16: *Hot Rod* ran a live feed to YouTube every day, but some of the tracks are that remote that there's no reliable internet connection. To get around the problem at Great Lakes they brought in this mobile satellite truck

17: Drag Week is all about the timeslips. Each day you have to hand in a timeslip to Tonya and Tara in the tower, and it's up to you to make sure you hand in the best one. No timeslip equals no result

Jason Tabscott's '76 Camaro was a bit of a sleeper. It ran mid-nines naturally aspirated and came second in the Street Race Small-Block class, but was tragically stolen straight after the event

Arby and Steve were also happy to finish this year. "It was probably the toughest one we've had so far," Arby said. "There were probably too many cars this year. In the past we've been able to make a couple of passes and watch some racing before getting on the road, but this time we seemed to spend a lot of time in the staging lanes. But we'll probably be back in a different car next year."

Brian and Dianne were stoked with their third-place finish in the Street Race Big-Block Naturally Aspirated class. "It was the best experience ever!" Dianne said. "I thought Bonneville was cool but doing Drag Week as competitors was way better. We've got to give a big shout-out to the guys at 417 Motorsports in Springfield, Missouri, and Shane McClellend, Danny Lansdowne and Dale Stapleton. We couldn't have done it without their help before the event."

Harry and the boys have put the Chevelle into storage for a possible return to Drag Week next year. "The amount of help we've had from people is awesome, but I'd like to thank my hot wife Ivona and my buddies Jett and Cortz for keeping things running at home, while I've been off having fun. We're going back next year to give the Chevelle another run."

As for John, there's no doubt he'll be back for another go with the Charger. "I'm not really happy with how we went this year. I know it will go faster, but it's all right for a 4165lb all-steel car. We've only done Drag Week passes with it so far, so low sevens is doing okay, especially with all the torture a car like this is put through on Drag Week."

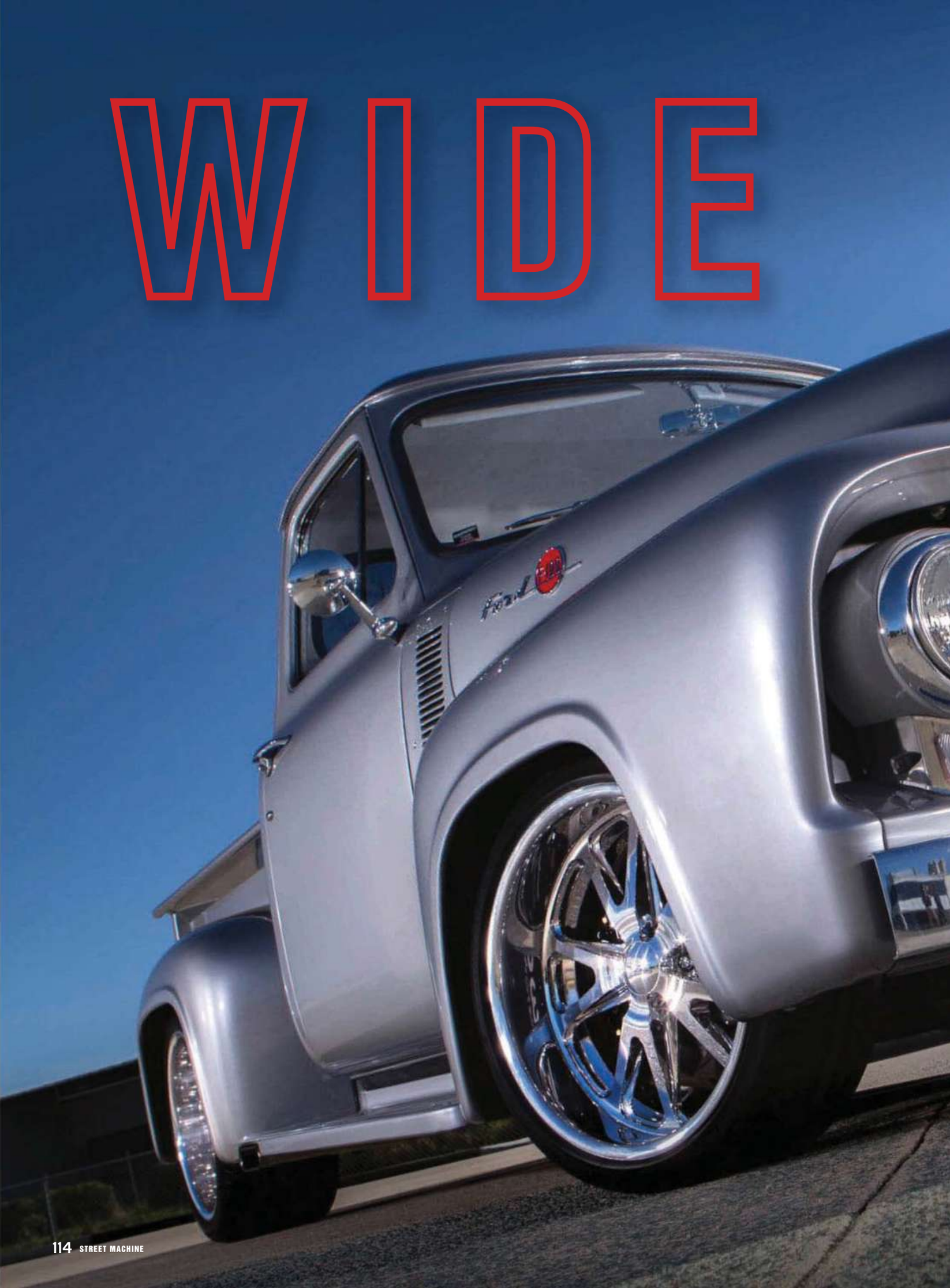
One thing all the guys agree on is that this is an event that has to be experienced for yourself. If it's not on your bucket list, then get out your pencil and add it.

HELL WEEK

DIANNE JENSEN THOUGHT BONNEVILLE WAS COOL, BUT DOING DRAG WEEK AS A COMPETITOR WAS WAY BETTER, SHE RECKONS

Some late rain on Day Four played havoc with a few of the cars, but the Chevelle powered on. However the boys did discover that the 45-year-old window rubbers were all cracked and perished, and it leaked like a sieve

WIDE



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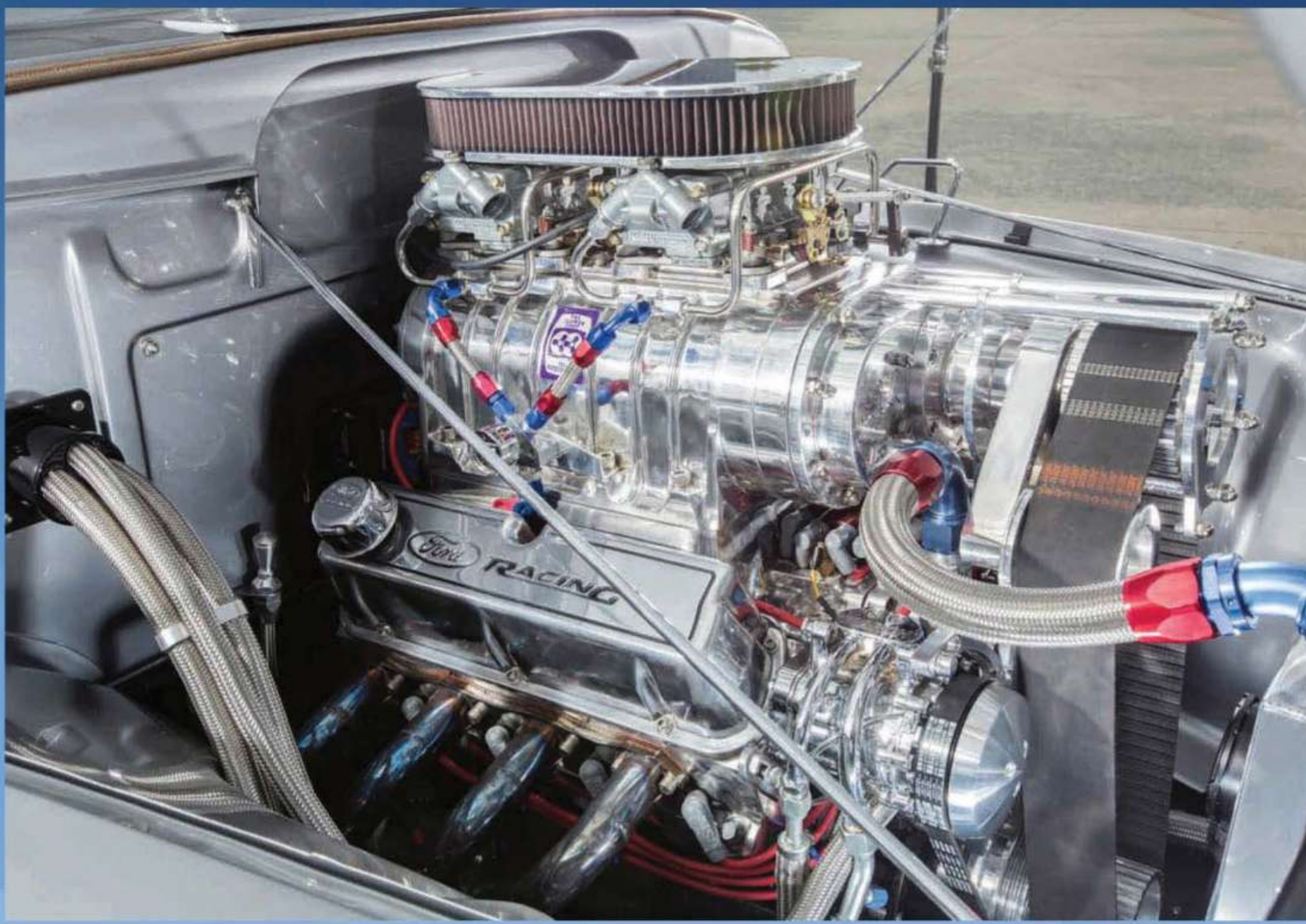

ABOVE: A lot of Jason's time went into making sure that metal mountain would remain out of sight. The firewall has been recessed and custom mounts made for the engine and transmission to keep it all under the bonnet. Jason also fabricated the polished stainless-steel headers, exhaust and side pipes

TRAY: This ain't no parts hauler. The bed has been tastefully filled with polished American oak floorboards, and underneath is a 60-litre drop tank fabricated by Jason after he'd shaved the factory fuel filler. He really is a jack-of-all-trades

INTERIOR: Real trucks have bench seats and column shifters. This one also has a Billet Specialties steering wheel and a set of Auto Meter Antique gauges to monitor the vital signs. Tunes come from an Alpine stereo and speakers

REGULAR *Street Machine* readers will no doubt be familiar with the work of Jason Wilkinson and the team at Wilky's Pro Paintz in Maroochydore, Queensland. He's built a number of recent *SM* feature cars, including Zane Hau's Plymouth Satellite (Oct '14) – a current Street Machine Of The Year contender – and Kris Nothdurft's LOOSSE VU Commodore ute (Sep '15).

It's incredible to think that Jason gets to work on cars of this calibre every day. A spray painter by trade, he started the business eight years ago and has gone from strength to strength on the back of hard graft and some very special skills. People now come to him for high-end fabrication work and specialist builds. "My business has sort of gone that way," Jason says. "We don't do any insurance work; we just do resto work and custom cars. When I first started I was predominantly doing custom paint, but now I can actually build a whole turn-key car."

This '55 Effy project came about thanks to the rolling showcase of Wilky's Pro Paintz handiwork on display at the Brisbane Hot Rod Show two years ago. "We had about five cars on display – a race car, a hot rod, a couple of street cars and *[Zane's]* Plymouth," Jason says. "The owner saw that get unveiled and it was perfect timing because he was just about to look around for someone to build his F-truck. I had never met the guy or done any work for him before. He liked everything about the Plymouth and got in contact with me to build the truck for him."

Said owner of this beautiful truck would prefer to remain anonymous, so we can't tell you much about him. We can however tell you all about the build itself, as it was done entirely in-house by Jason and the Wilky's Pro Paintz team.

It started with a truck that was imported from the States about three years ago. It was a fairly clean streeter with a stock 302 Windsor and a set of American Racing wheels, but the new owner wanted more. When he dropped it off at Wilky's, he also arranged for the delivery of a set of 20-inch Budnik GTX wheels and a blown engine from Big Al's Toybox boasting no less than 713 neddies at the flywheel. The rest just kind of evolved, partly in response to the owner's vision and partly due to Jason's creative direction over the course of the six-month build. "He had a fair idea of the colour that he wanted," Jason says. "He chose the wheels and he wanted a supercharged engine. That was what I had to work with and I just put it all into reality."

That reality involved finding a way to make those big billet rims fit under the guards. The client was keen on a set of wheel tubs, but Jason came up with a far more subtle method by widening the rear fenders and running boards to match. "When you stand at the back of one of these F100s, the back guards actually have a narrower track width than the front guards," Jason says. "So I widened the rear guards so they matched the front and then put a small tub in."

Next up, the firewall had to be recessed to make room for that monster motor, and a set of custom engine and transmission mounts were created to make sure everything would fit under the bonnet. When all the fabrication work was finalised the truck was lovingly coated in BMW Platinum Grey and completely re-wired.

The 408ci Ford Windsor V8 is based on a Dart four-bolt block running an Eagle 4340 double-keyed crank, H-series Clevite bearings and a set of JE forged 8.5:1 blower pistons with file-fit rings installed on Eagle H-beam steel conrods. The

THE OWNER CHOSE THE COLOUR, THE WHEELS AND THE SUPERCHARGED ENGINE. THAT WAS WHAT I HAD TO WORK WITH AND I JUST PUT IT ALL INTO REALITY

From this angle you'd never guess those rear fenders have been widened 100mm – it looks factory-stock. The build started with a set of 20in Budnik GTX billet wheels, and Jason had to find a creative way to fit the 12in-wide rear rims under the fenders

polished Edelbrock aluminium cylinder heads hold Manley stainless-steel valves and are operated by a Competition Cams 660/660 roller cam and a set of Magnum pushrods. A Blower Shop 8/71 supercharger sits atop a BDS blower manifold and is fed by twin Holley 750 boost-reference carburettors. A Mallory distributor and an MSD AL8 coil and leads supply the spark, while a Mellings high-volume oil pump and Canton large-capacity sump keep everything lubricated. There's a full complement of stainless-steel braided hoses running Aeroflow Performance fittings, and a custom-made polished aluminium radiator for cooling.

Backing up the mammoth motor is a Street Smart Ford 4R70W electronic four-speed transmission from Performance Automatic with a 2200rpm stall converter. It feeds power through to a Ford nine-inch running custom 28-spline axles and a set of 3.55:1 gears. The diff is held in place by a custom four-link set-up with adjustable Panhard bar, while up front Jason installed adjustable upper and lower tubular A-arms. There's a set of Strange springs and QA1 coil-overs at both ends.

The old truck stops and steers like a new one thanks to a rack-and-pinion power steering upgrade and a set of Wilwood disc brakes all 'round – 360mm with six-piston calipers on the front and 300mm with four-piston calipers out back. Rubber is suitably low-profile modern stuff by Michelin – 245/35 up front and 335/30 at the business end.

We can't help but wonder whether doing this kind of work every day ever gets, well, a bit boring, but Jason assures us that's definitely not the case. He loves building high-end modified cars for a living. "It's pretty cool when they say: 'I want to have this motor, these wheels and this colour – make it happen for me,'" he says. It would be fair to say Jason gets more job satisfaction than most of us!

WHEN I FIRST STARTED I WAS PREDOMINANTLY DOING CUSTOM PAINT, BUT NOW I CAN ACTUALLY BUILD A WHOLE TURN-KEY CAR

ANONYMOUS
1955 FORD F100
Colour: Platinum Grey

DONK
Make: Ford Windsor V8 408ci
Block: Dart four-bolt
Crank: Eagle 4340 double-keyed
Rods: Eagle H-beam steel
Pistons: JE forged 8.5:1 blower
Camshaft: Competition Cams 660/660 roller
Intake: BDS blower manifold
Blower: The Blower Shop 8/71
Carbs: Twin Holley 750 boost-reference
Heads: Edelbrock aluminium
Valves: Manley stainless steel
Ignition: Mallory distributor; MSD AL8 coil
Exhaust: Custom stainless steel

SHIFT
Gearbox: Ford 4R70W
Converter: 2200rpm stall
Diff: Ford 9in, 28-spline axles

BENEATH
Front: Adjustable tubular A-arms
Rear: Custom four-link, adjustable Panhard bar
Springs: Strange (f & r)
Shocks: QA1 coil-overs (f & r)
Brakes: Wilwood discs (f & r)

ROLLING STOCK
Rims: Budnik GTX; 20x8 (f), 20x12 (r)
Tyres: Michelin; 245/35 (f), 335/30 (r)

THANKS
Jason and the team at Wilky's Pro Paintz in Maroochydore, Qld

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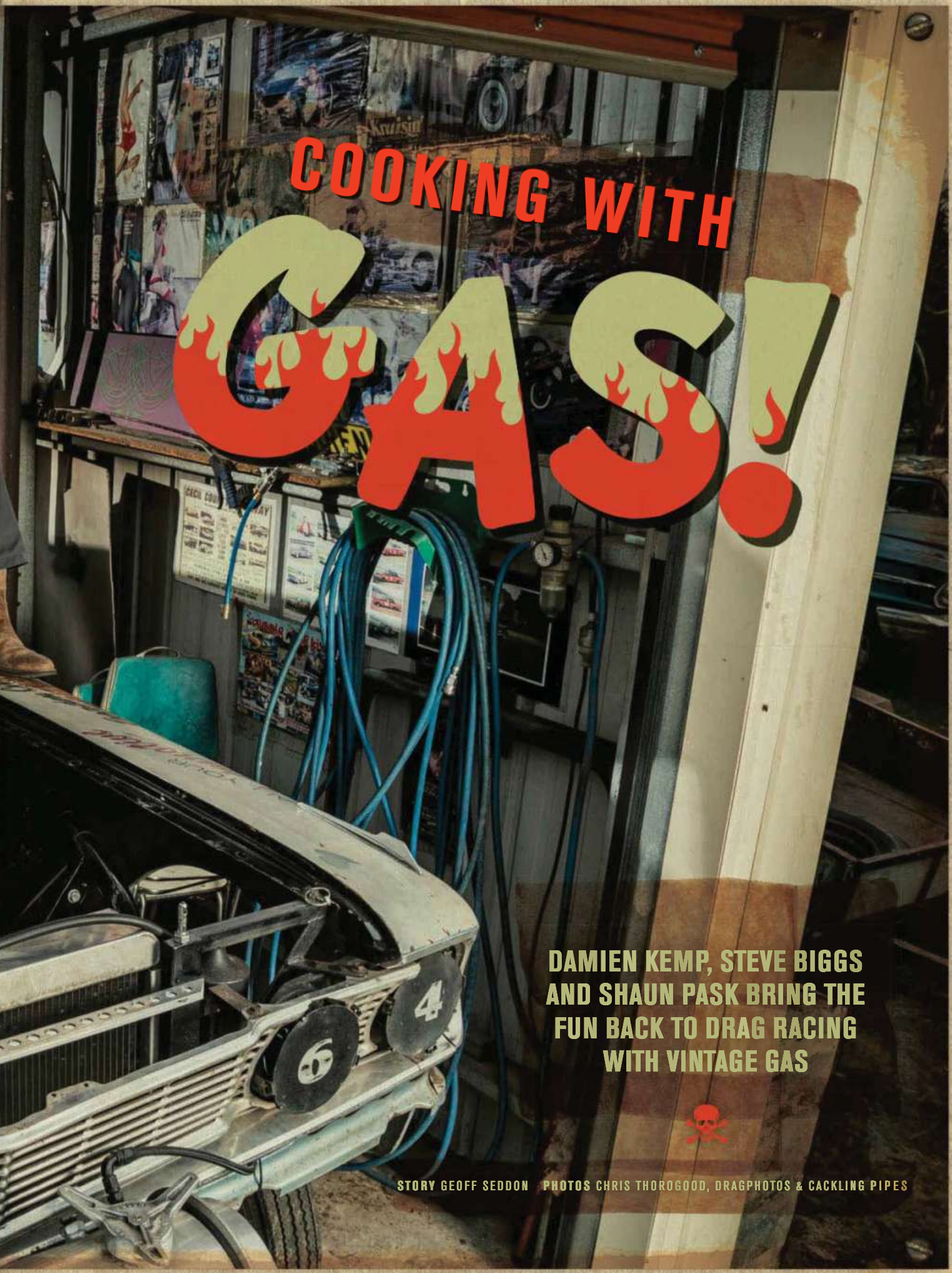

COOKING WITH GAS!

DAMIEN KEMP, STEVE BIGGS AND SHAUN PASK BRING THE FUN BACK TO DRAG RACING WITH VINTAGE GAS

STORY GEOFF SEDDON PHOTOS CHRIS THOROGOOD, DRAGPHOTOS & CACKLING PIPES

VINTAGE GAS

DAMIEN Kemp is on a mission to reinvigorate his favourite sport and have a good time while he's at it. Drag racing is supposed to be fun, he reckons, like it was in the old days, so to go forward, maybe we should all take a big step back.

For some years now, he and his buddy Steve Biggs have travelled throughout regional Victoria and up the east coast of Australia bringing their two-car Ford-vs-Chev Vintage Gas show to the masses. When we spoke, they were just back from a race-fuelled run of five meets over three states in just over a week.

"We do the same trip each year," Damien says. "We started at Heathcote at the March Rodders Fun Day, then we went up to Sydney and raced at a street meet on the Wednesday night. Then on to Willowbank for a Friday night street meet, a test-and-tune on the Saturday night and the Nostalgias on Sunday.

"At other times, we've raced at Portland – they are the best bunch of guys – Ballarat, Bairnsdale in the old days, Warwick, Warrnambool, Mildura, Wilby and Casterton. We've developed a following; travelling around has had an effect. Over the past two years, we and Shaun Pask from Queensland have been talking a lot, and we came up with a national set of guidelines for Vintage Gas four or five months ago. They are not a copy of anywhere else but just apply to Australia. The class is all about having a good time and putting on a show; no more, no less.

"We had 14 real Vintage Gas cars at Willowbank, with another eight racing the same weekend in Sydney. All up there are 31 cars finished or being built that we know about. A lot of the guys are really passionate about early-60s gassers; other guys are purely in it for the fun."

This is reflected in one of the gasser trademarks: the cars' names emblazoned in period signwriting along both sides, one of the few mandatory requirements of the class. Along with the crazy nose-up stance, it adds another level of entertainment to the mix and makes it easier for the punters to barrack for their favourites. Damien's Funderbolt is better known than most Top Fuellers, while Steve's Chev is a Loose

1> Simon Bishop imported his '64 Nova from the States with the Piston Loose warpaint. He blew the Nova's 396 big-block prior to the recent Willowbank Nostalgias, and fitted a 350 from the shed for a best of 12.6@107mph

2> Allen Millard has got all of the traditional Aussie-gasser style points bang-on with his FC. The Shafter was originally red-motor powered, but has since been upgraded to a 327ci small-block and Powerglide combo that's gone as fast as 11.4 seconds. Allen finished runner-up at the most recent Nostalgias at Willowbank

3> Steve Biggs's Loose Cannon '56 Chev runs a 502ci big-block Chev, backed by a Turbo 400. The car has run a best of 10.3@130mph. He's keen to travel more with the car, perhaps to Perth or even NZ!

4> Paul Johnson brought his bitching '62 Falcon tudor from Bakersfield in the US, already set up as a gasser. He even got to run it at the March Meet! It packs a 496ci on pump fuel, and has run a best of 10.5 seconds so far, with methanol to come

5> Bridger Frankland's FB is a cool custom with the roof chopped 4.5in and the front doors stretched 7in. The donk is a 427ci big-block, with a 'Glide, nine-inch and four-link, for a best of 11.30@121mph

THERE ARE 31 GASSERS FINISHED OR BEING BUILT THAT WE KNOW ABOUT

MAIN: Darren Gall's Mighty Mouse Toyota 700 has a long history as a racer. It packs a 327 Chev and runs 10.5s all day long. He took out VG at the August Nostalgia meet at Willowbank Raceway

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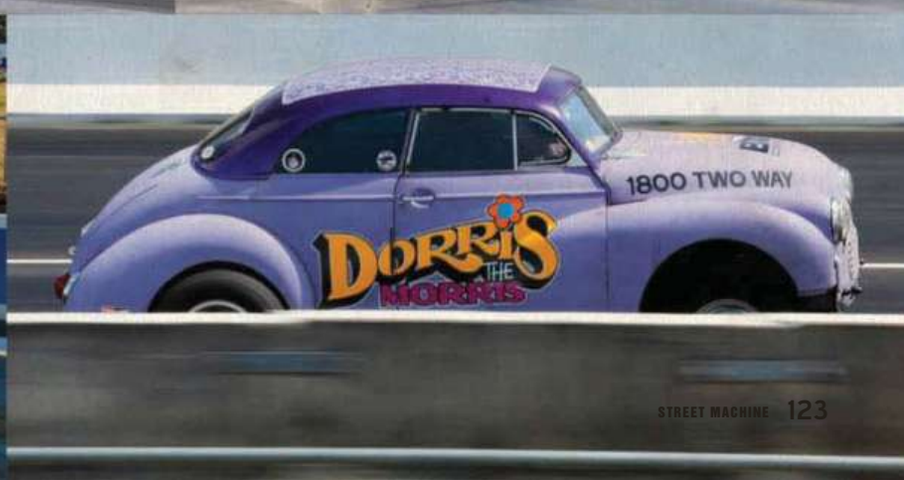

1800 TWO WAY
DORRIS THE MORRIS

6

7

8

CLASS RULES

VINTAGE Gas rules were developed so that all vehicles would look like the gas cars of the 50s, 60s and early 70s. The explicit intention of the class is to put on a show for the spectators, and to grow and promote grass roots drag racing.

Body styles are limited to pre-1970 Aussie and US production vehicles, pre-1948 hot rods and other period-correct cars as allowed by the committee. Both front doors must open and fibreglass bodies are fine. Roof chops are the only allowed form of streamlining.

Negative rake (nose-up) is mandatory – preferably by means of a straight-axle front end – as is having the car's funky name emblazoned down the sides. Also compulsory are open headers and slicks; this is drag racing, after all.

Engine choice is broad, the leveller being a 10sec minimum ET in competition. Alloy heads, superchargers, NOS and mechanical injection are allowed, but not EFI. Vehicles must be self-starting and run on alcohol or pump fuels. Manuals, autos and transbrakes are okay, but not multi-stage clutches and electric or air shifters.

Full chassis are allowed, but only in box-section, and everything must comply with all ANDRA regulations. To get a full list of rules, join the Aussie Vintage Gassers Facebook page; where you can also get in touch with regional delegates who can advise on any aspect of your build. Search for 'em on Facebook!

9

10

6> Shane Corr's Hump This is a spectacular performer! It runs a hot 202 with triple two-inch SUs and a three-speed all-synchro 'box. The Corr family also run a '64 Nova dubbed Gas Chamber and a Vauxhall Viva. Photo: Steve Kelly

7> Shaun Pask's Knuckle Duster Valiant runs a 6/71-blown 440 on E85. It has run a best of 10.1@130mph and recently fitted front brakes so he can keep up with Funderbolt and Loose Cannon in the burnout stakes

8> Peter Raines's Bad Ass To started life as an Aussie-delivered '57 Chev, now converted to two-door-post spec. It runs a 400ci SBC with a Powerglide transmission and nitrous assistance

9> Nigel Elsmore's '61 Hillman Husky Dawg-Orn Crazy is a cool thing, fitted with a SBC, Powerglide and HiLux diff. It has run a best of 12.75 so far and is equipped with a bog-roll holder for those scary moments! Combinations like this were popular in the early days of Australian drag racing

10> Damien Kemp's Funderbolt has recently stepped up to 440ci SBF in blown spec with an 8/71 Hampton blower, four-port Hilborn injection and E85 fuel

Cannon and Shaun has his hands full with Knuckle Duster. Other names include Piston Loose, X-Rated (XR Falcon), Gas Monkey, Dawg-orn Crazy, Mighty Mouse (Toyota 700), GasBagga, Hump This (guess), and a ratty-looking, blindingly fast Studebaker called Reckless. Throw in coloured Perspex windows, open headers and slicks extending well clear of the rear guards and you've got a spectacle already happening in the staging lanes!

Once on the track, gasser pilots love to indulge in long smoky burnouts – often to the chagrin of track officials – and wild wheel-up launches. Having fun is compulsory – it says so in the rules – the crowd feeds off it and the racers feed off the crowd. "If you're not smiling on the line, you can get the fuck away," is how Damo eloquently puts it.

"People are always saying that drag racing is dying, but we do ourselves out of it a bit by being so damn serious. Everyone talks about what it used to be like, and why isn't it like the old times? It's not fun losing to the guy with the most money, and it's not fun spending the most money to win. If you're not having fun, I don't get why you'd even do it."

It's no secret drag racing is hurting. The outrageous cost of Group One stands in stark contrast to dwindling crowds, to the extent that a recent three-time Aussie Top Fuel champion like Darren Morgan can no longer afford to compete. Damien's vision is not a million miles from the revered Wild Bunch crew, which in 1996 morphed into Top Doorslammers. The big difference was the Wild Bunch was an exhibition class; even if as a racer you had a bad weekend, you at least covered your petrol money, got to see a bit of Australia, and all the racers and crews got on the cans at stumps. The object of the whole exercise was to put on a show that would draw a crowd and then divvy up the takings.

"In the old days, if there was a thousand bucks in prize money and 10 drivers, that was a hundred bucks each," Damien says. "Everyone is equal, everyone is the same. It didn't matter whether you won or lost, you were there to put on a show. Spectators just want something exciting to watch. Gassers are crazy, loud, hairy-looking things. They could go straight, they could go left, they could go right. They add a bit of unpredictability."

DAMIEN'S VISION IS NOT A MILLION MILES FROM THE REVERED WILD BUNCH CREW

BELOW: Juice Walton's Studebaker is dubbed Reckless and packs a mechanically injected big-block. His plan is to get it up on the back bumper with a blown combo!

For all their sometimes goofy looks, gassers are seriously fast, with many close to the 10-second cut-off, and some going even quicker. Chief among them is Funderbolt, which has just returned to action after a year off undergoing a major rebuild, which included a full chassis and an all-new blown and injected 440-cube Windsor running on E85. The long motor was built by Paul Rogers, a legendary late-60s Ford Zephyr gasser racer who obviously hasn't lost his touch.

"When I started out, I was hoping to do a 12," Damien says, "and the best I got out of the old one was 10.77. I've done 25 passes with the new set-up, but only the last six were full noise and it's running 9.1s at 150mph. From the feedback I've got, it wouldn't surprise me if it was one of the quickest gassers in the world, and there's still a fair bit left in it.

"The blown engine is a whole different kettle of fish," he continues. "It doesn't wind up, it's all there in the first second. I did a 1.33sec 60-foot and was pretty rapt with that.

"Steve and I have always been Chev versus Ford. I used to be faster than him and then he was faster than me, running 10.3s at 125mph. So I told him it's time he pulled his wallet out and grew some balls."

And how is the transmission holding up?

"It's got a dirty Powerglide in it," Damo says. "I was a bit dubious about the C4. I may go for a Jerico, but I'm just going to get used to the car first. It drives so much nicer but you're still never sure which way it will go off the line! It's good up the top end and the parachute's great for slowing down from 150mph, very stable.

"But speed is just another thing. My best idea of what drag racing is: I got to the other end, didn't break anything, didn't hit anything and the beer's still cold."

Good on ya, mate. Sounds like fun.

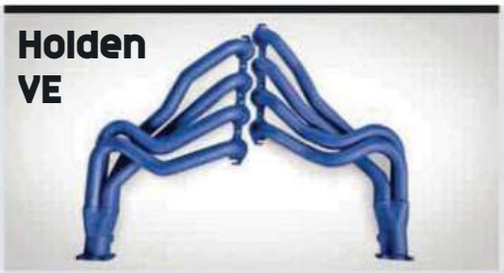
11> Malcom Baker's XP Falcon ute did the big haul up from Bacchus Marsh in Victoria to the August Nostalgia round at Willowbank, running mid-13s with 302 Windsor power

12> Scott Ribbons's WAT DA? Austin A40 is a kooky thing, complete with a wooden Moon tank! While the car runs a Holden six for Six Bangers duty, it was packing a 308 for this year's Sydney Nostalgia meet

YOU'RE STILL NEVER QUITE SURE WHICH WAY IT WILL GO OFF THE LINE

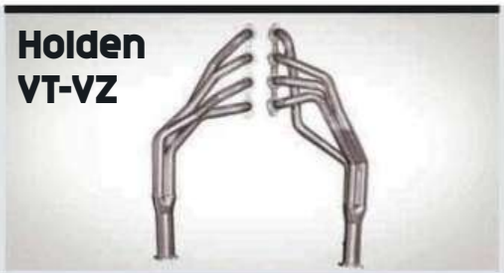
HURRICANE HEADERS

Holden VE



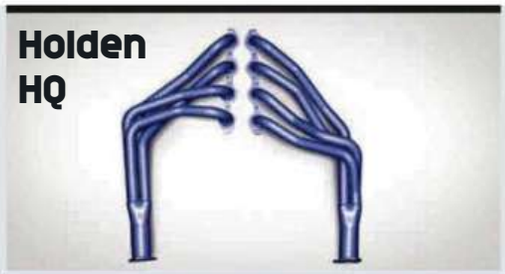
4 into 1, 1 7/8", SS & HSV

Holden VT-VZ



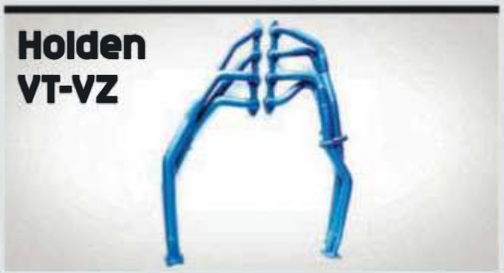
4 into 1, 1 7/8", 5.7L - 6.0L

Holden HQ



4 into 1, 1 3/4" HQ - LS1

Holden VT-VZ



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STORY MARK ARBLASTER **PHOTOS** PETER BATEMAN & *SM* ARCHIVES

PART ONE OF OUR LOOK AT WHAT DATALOGGING CAN DO FOR YOU

KNOWLEDGE IS HORSEPOWER

> PART ONE OF OUR LOOK AT WHAT DATALOGGING CAN DO FOR YOU

STREET machiners are usually pretty quick on the uptake when it comes to taking something from the racing scene and applying it to their street cars. Whether it's running fat tyres on the back, bolting on a bonnet scoop or running spoilers and flares, what happens on a race track normally filters down to the street pretty quickly.

The uptake of data acquisition – or datalogging – has been a little slower. While people are quite happy to spend tens of thousands of dollars on an engine, wheels, paint and interior, when it comes to having something that will enable you to get the most out of your engine – and also prevent it from going bang – people don't always see the value.

In the past, installing a computer on a race engine meant a huge outlay on specialised sensors and equipment that resulted in reams of paper print-outs filled with data to be analysed. These days, though, most performance aftermarket computers offer datalogging of up to 20 channels as a standard feature in the ECU (Engine Control Unit).

The Haltech Platinum Sport ECU that I use on my WAR440 Valiant was released approximately seven years ago, and aside from being super-reliable and accurate, it was one of the first to offer datalogging as a standard feature, rather than a generally very expensive extra.

In most applications there are a number of channels you would want to log to keep tabs on the health of your motor, and many of these are even more critical on a boosted application, where reduced or increased input could potentially damage or destroy the engine.

Over the next two issues, we'll speak to a number of tuners and racers who would rather be without their left nut than go to the track without datalogging. First up, though, I'll take you through what I have learned from using datalogging on my Valiant, WAR440. It runs a 500ci Wedge motor, with a ProCharger and water-to-air intercooler.

The Val was built with Drag Week-style events in mind, so last year's inaugural *Street Machine* Drag Challenge was a great opportunity to put it to the test. In the months leading up to the event, the car had been running well, making big power and was very reliable. I felt it was a real contender to win the overall event, as at that time it was as quick as the leading cars, and it still had more left in the tank. Unfortunately not everything went to plan, but the Haltech's datalogging capabilities took the guesswork out of the post-event fix.

On the first opportunity to race at Drag Challenge, at a Street Outlaws-type event in Albury, the car went lean in the burnout, signalled by a drop in power followed by a miss and backfire through the intake. It was later discovered that the fitting from the bottom of the intake manifold to the

RIGHT & MAIN: To diagnose what went wrong with WAR440 in last year's Drag Challenge, Arby sat down with Haltech's Scott Hilzinger to go over the data

ABOVE: Powered by energy drinks! WAR400 packs a F3R ProCharged 500ci Wedge motor, with a water-to-air intercooler, backed by a Powerglide and 5500rpm converter. The package makes 1750hp and has run a best of 8.55 seconds over the quarter-mile, though not with the air con turned on

MAP sensor had vibrated loose during the driving stage, so when the engine saw boost, it wasn't supplied with the right amount of fuel.

But everything else seemed fine, so we continued on until the car made a full pass at Calder and the engine dropped two cylinders. It seems it blew a head gasket between the two centre cylinders on the driver's side. After removing the plugs it was found that two of them were burnt. While we finished the event and the car still managed to run an 11-second pass with the blown gasket and in aspirated trim, the engine needed to come out so we could work out what had caused the issue. After all, nobody wants to reload a new engine and then tear it up on the very next pass due to the same problem!

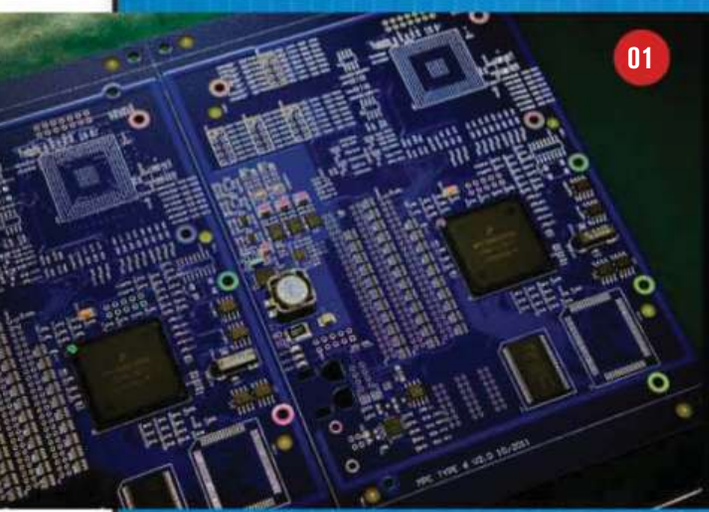
When we pulled the motor down we found that only a single layer of the Cometic gasket had been nicked between cylinders. It could have been weakened by it going lean in Albury, and was then pushed out when the engine saw boost. The best way to get to the bottom of things was to take a look at the datalogging results. Did we lose fuel pressure? Was the engine lean? Did we have an injector failure? These questions could all be answered by looking at the data stored in the Haltech system.

LOOK AND LEARN

WE BEGAN by looking at the burnout, which showed the engine hit 8400rpm at one point. But the engine has a 7800rpm rev limiter and at 7900rpm it cuts fuel and ignition, so how could that have happened?

If you look at the boost and throttle position, you can see that as the engine starts to come up on boost the throttle is reduced; it is actually the kinetic energy of the engine's rotating assembly that spins it up to 8400rpm, even though the throttle is closed.

CONCLUSION: The big over-rev can't really be fixed, as the car can just as easily unload the tyres at any point while racing. Substantially lowering the rev limiter could help, but that would give us a smaller window of revs to use.



1 & 2: Haltech has two million-dollar machines to build ECUs in-house. Each machine plucks tiny microchips from the spools (lower right) and sticks them on the printed blue circuit board. Each ECU has a specific build sheet, and the programmer selects the various chips from the spools for fitment. Once the boards are assembled they go into a special oven that uses vapour to fuse the solder on the boards

BATTERY VOLTAGE

LOW battery voltage is a big issue in a hi-po engine. Multiple fuel pumps, water pump, electric fan and the ignition system all require 13.8-plus volts to run perfectly, with the ideal voltage being 14.4. In this case the engine voltage dropped over the course of the power run; the half-dozen spikes are the alternator attempting to catch up, suggesting a blower belt slip issue.

In addition to the effect this has on the ignition system, which would really be struggling to recharge the coil between each discharge and thus lower the spark delivered to the engine, it also affects the injector firing.

Let's say that at 14.4V it takes 0.8 seconds for the injector to open; reducing the voltage to 11.6V can change the injector's opening time to 1.36 seconds. While this may not sound bad, it clearly affects the engine's fuelling system.

CONCLUSION: The low battery voltage was due to belt slip, requiring a different style of belt or a better tensioner. As a precaution, Adam from JEM also used the low-voltage compensation table, which allowed him to counteract the drop in voltage. He added low-voltage parameters to the injector opening time to ensure that fuel supply was met.

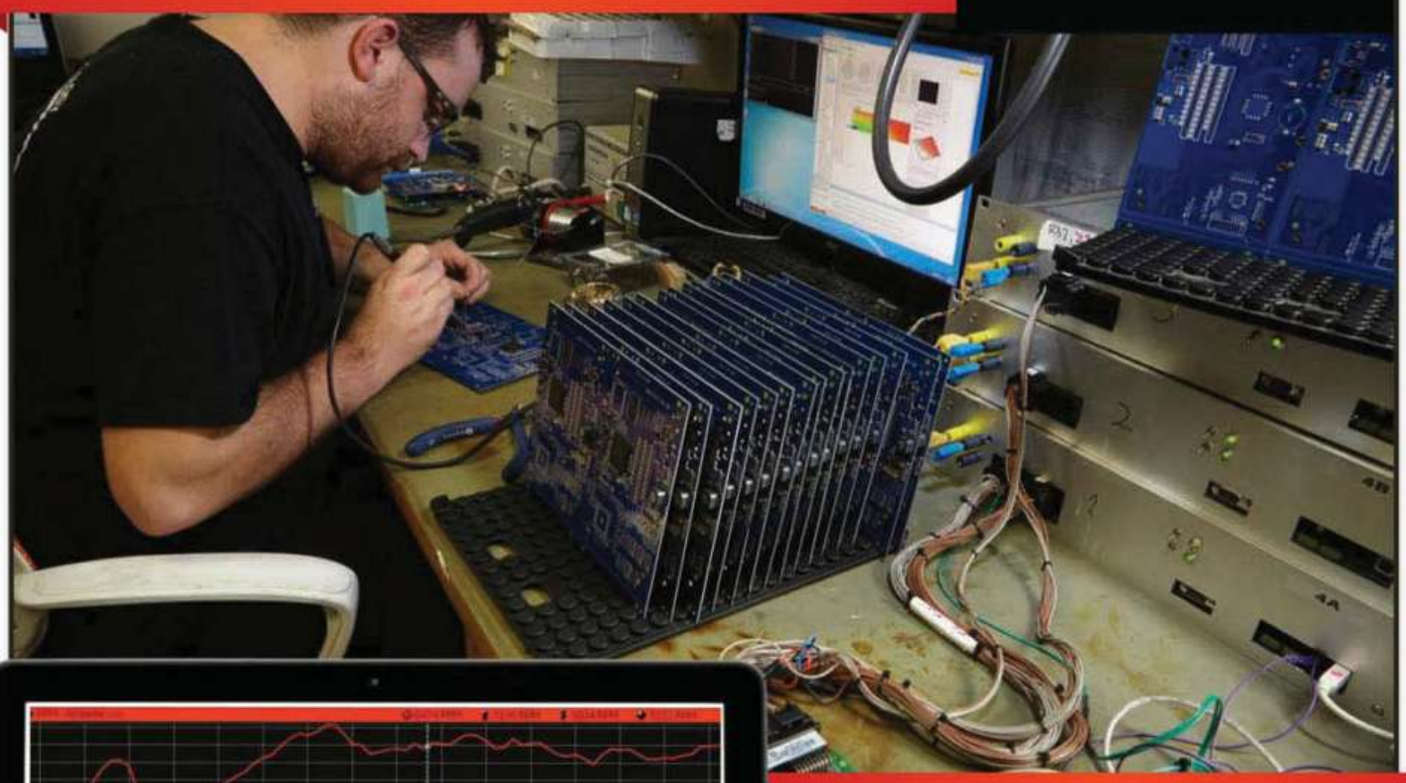
THE graph on the left clearly shows an issue with the air intake temperature sensor – it was out of range. This meant the sensor was either faulty or unplugged. Some tuners may allow the intake temperature to make changes to the engine tune, but in most cases these changes will be subtle, so that one faulty sensor won't cause fuel or ignition modifications that can harm the engine.

Should a tuner want to allow a change based on a sensor reading, they can use the air temperature compensation table, where various percentages of compensation can be installed. In the graph on the right we see that with a 40° intake temperature Adam has allowed the addition of 0.6 per cent fuel.

With this system, if a sensor ever fails it will go to a lower number, so it will always add fuel rather than lean out. Naturally, tuners have the option of turning this feature off so that whatever tune the engine runs on the dyno can be run exactly same way on the street or track.

CONCLUSION: The air intake sensor was clearly out of range; this could be easily fixed by replacing the faulty sensor with a new one.

AIR TEMP SENSOR



BELOW: The fail rate on a newly built Haltech ECU is less than one per cent. Each ECU is test-run for a few hours before being dispatched. Any microprocessor/chip failure is repaired manually before being retested

COOLANT TEMP

THIS shows that the engine's coolant temp was fine on the track. But a great addition to the cooling system would be a pressure sensor, which detects boost leaking into the coolant system. It can shut the engine down if necessary, preventing a costly engine failure.

CONCLUSION: While there were no issues with the coolant temperature, it would be worth adding a pressure sensor to the engine's range of diagnostic tools.

Adam Neish test-runs the Haltech Racepak logging dash, which allows 2GB of continuous datalogging on an SD card. It can be programmed to turn on automatically via certain triggers; boost and rpm are the main ones. The memory card containing the data can be removed from the digital dash and plugged into your laptop

FUEL PRESSURE VS MAP

WITH any boosted application, a rising-rate fuel pressure regulator is a must. Fuel pressure needs to increase in proportion to manifold pressure. When your manifold has, say, 10lb of pressure, that's 10lb stopping the injector from pushing fuel out. This needs to be added to the fuel pressure to compensate.

Here we see that the engine showed good fuel pressure over the whole run. We could also check whether the pumps were doing their job: at 7000rpm we saw 62lb of fuel pressure at 20lb of boost.

CONCLUSION: This told us the fuel system was spot-on.

OIL PRESSURE

WORKING on the assumption that 10lb of oil pressure per 1000rpm is needed on a supercharged engine, it was clear that the oil pressure was solid for this combo. It is interesting to note that the engine did drop from 68lb to 58lb over a 2.3-second period; this may be because I was pedalling the car over the course of the run, but it was enough to make us take a second look.

CONCLUSION: This engine has 12 litres of oil in the sump, so while it does not have an oiling issue, the data showed there may be a need to double-check that the sump door was working properly and there was sufficient room between the bottom of the pick-up and the oil pan.

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AIR-FUEL RATIO/GAS TEMP

THIS engine is running dual air/fuel meters in the collectors. Before making any assumptions about the minor variances between the two meters, we took a look at the fuel trim table to check there were no fuel changes to either bank to compensate for manifold or inlet anomalies; in this case there wasn't.

Dyno testing with an EGT in each cylinder will give a true reading of how each cylinder is performing, but tuners have had to add up to 20 per cent fuel difference between the front and rear cylinder on some engines due to poor manifold design.

CONCLUSION: In this case there was no trim required. The small difference between cylinders was more than likely due to air leaking around the slip-jointed collectors. An easy way to check would be to swap the sensors between the collectors to see if they read the same. If they don't, it can then be attributed to sensor variation.

03

04

3: Peter Allen is one of 36 people who work behind the scenes at Haltech. Back-end programming is incredibly detailed and time-consuming – it took five years of programming and testing to build the current Platinum ECU. The new Elite series is so advanced that every time you start your car, the ECU learns and finds a better way to do it next time!

4: Understanding what has happened in an engine – especially one that has failed – is the key to ensuring it won't happen again. Only a crazy person would reload their engine bay with a new motor without understanding why the last one failed

ENGINE PROTECTION

ENGINE protection capability is probably the most exciting development in ECU technology in the past 20 years. If any of the criteria in the top table is detected by the ECU (low fuel pressure, low oil pressure etc) for more than 0.8 seconds, it will make changes to the engine as per the tuner's instructions in the bottom table. This means that, short of a mechanical breakage, there is no way you can further hurt your engine once the problem is detected. How the ECU handles the problem can be specifically tailored by the tuner.

So why did my engine hurt itself? Because I'd turned this protection off while trying to get a handle on making tuning changes on the road. D'oh!

While my engine has most of the important items, the addition of eight exhaust-gas temperature probes (to monitor individual cylinder temperatures) and wheel sensors (to allow the ECU to run traction control) would take things to the next level. More next issue!

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DIRTY STUFF

WILLIAM PORKER

SOMETIMES, you have to suffer for your sport. Tooling down the highway a couple of weeks back, I spotted two clean and neat hot rods driving towards me. One was a T-bucket, the other was probably based on an early Chevy. The Chevy had a hood but no side curtains, while the T-bucket was completely open with only a minimal windscreen, and it was bucketing down rain. They were obviously going north for a show 'n' shine or a hot rod event, and had chosen to drive with the wind in their hair, and bugs in their eyes.

The T-bucket bloke was leading, the driving rain reducing him to a miserable drowned rat in a soaked coat, while the one steering the little Chevy wasn't getting off much better, as the rain was horizontal and he needed windscreen wipers on his glasses.

But there they both were, determined to sit on 100 clicks and suffer, soaked through and freezing – as long as the other bloke was in front or behind, there was no giving up and looking for shelter from that ice-cold driving rain. Both hairy-chested blokes, I reckon!

Saw a sad example recently. A race engine had developed a major bottom-end rumble, which sounded like a typical broken crank. They had no spare engine at that event, so the team pulled the plug and became spectators until the noise and fury was all over.

Towed the race car home, ripped the engine out the next day, bolted it into an engine stand and dropped the sump, and looked at the internals with a mix of disbelief and astonishment. Then they got on the dog-and-bone to bring me into this scene, as they thought my old age and experience might be able to diagnose why one of the main bearing caps had been ripped clean off the block. They were only two-bolt cast-iron main caps without support bars across the tops, and this engine had been built by a performance screw-it-together man. The team had no clues as to why their block had let go.

It wasn't a difficult problem to diagnose, after looking at the still-intact cap with the two high-tensile bolts still attached to broken-off bits of cast-iron block. The engine builder had replaced the original factory bolts with non-standard-length, over-the-counter HT pieces, in case the originals were too tired and stretched. Fair enough, as I would have done exactly that during the rebuild. But where this nong had stuffed up was to buy bolts without the under-head shoulders that are essential to locating the caps, and then tighten these as usual after fitting the crank, not realising or caring that these replacement bolts were half an inch too short.

Sure, they obviously torqued up okay without stripping the threads, but with the big ask on to resist the massive forces of high revs and double-stock-horsepower loads, there wasn't enough deep thread-grab in that block, so the fragile iron casting simply gave up, and two big chunks with bolts still attached ripped out. Luckily, they had shut the mill down in time to save the steel billet crank.

It was a case of the original engine designers specifying what was essential to keep their mills together, and if you want to change stuff like that, have a really good look and a think, before acting!

There was another block problem I ran across a while back, where another race car engine had been seeping coolant down into the oil, and the owner-engineer kept on changing head gaskets and bearings, because the contaminated oil wasn't slippery enough to keep the conrod shells alive, and he was looking hard at the cylinder head for cracks in the inlet ports and rust holes through the cylinder-bore walls.

Finally, after a telephone consultation where we discussed block and head porosity problems and various ways of diagnosing these, I said to pull the engine, strip it to a bare block, plug up the holes and fill the coolant passages to the top deck with kerosene. Then stand the six-pot casting upright on a pair of carpenter's saw horses, so we could look at the undersides of the cylinder bores.

After that was done and this lump of cast iron had sat and contemplated its navel overnight, we had a look in the morning, and between two cylinder bores in the floor of that block, the clear kerosene was slowly dripping from what was obviously a crack between the two holes.

THE DRIVING RAIN WAS REDUCING THE T-BUCKET BLOKE TO A MISERABLE DROWNED RAT, WHILE THE ONE STEERING THE LITTLE CHEVY WASN'T GETTING OFF MUCH BETTER

What this owner-engineer hadn't seen when he bought this engine second-hand as a bargain performance mill was that two adjacent cylinders were sleeved. And the reconditioning shop had bored right through to fit the interference-fit sleeves by pushing them through, instead of bottoming them on a land at the base, and this stress had caused the hard-to-see crack, and the poor bloke all that grief.

All we could do was dump that bargain block, and begin a major, expensive rebuild.

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WILD AT HEART

VICTOR BRAY

THERE has been plenty of action lately, with the release of the Australian Professional Drag Racing calendar, the return to racing at Calder Park, and some developments on superchargers. At long last the sport seems to have turned a corner!

ANDRA has come to an arrangement and is talking to the tracks, and it looks like everyone is going to be happy in the long run. For once the future appears very bright and positive. The first good sign – and it is great news – is that we have a 12-round calendar for Group One.

Doorslammer has plenty of racing coming up. First up is the East Coast Nationals in Sydney, then two rounds at the Perth Motorplex and Calder Park, then it is back to Sydney, before finishing off at the Winternationals.

I'm looking forward to it because it's a true national calendar and it's going to be very interesting where it takes us. All up – with the two rounds already completed in Darwin – there will be nine rounds.

New tracks in Adelaide, Swan Hill and Dubbo are getting built to national and international standards. So with Calder Park returning, and the new track in Cairns, there will be so much racing we won't know what to do with ourselves!

Things are a lot more positive than they've been in years, and the racers are starting to feel that way as well. The sport is in a good position to move forward.

The return to Calder Park is really important for the sport because it is the home of the Nationals. I remember the halcyon days of the Nationals at Calder, when you had around 60,000 spectators, and you were all pitted on the infield. They had it grassed up, and it was pretty nice. It was such a good layout because everyone was in the centre. That's the sort of thing we have to aim for again. Each meeting used to go so smoothly, and the crowds were so big and were going berserk because they were so close to the track. Calder Park is a good facility – it just needs a touch-up.

We pretty much bypassed a whole generation in Victoria, so we need to reintroduce them to drag racing – not only the Top Fuel cars but the full range of blown sedans, turbo cars and the sports compact cars. Jamboree is coming down to Melbourne too, and that's going to get a lot of young people involved in the sport. They will say: "Hey, wow, did you see that Toyota going down there in five seconds?" That's the sort of thing this younger generation is looking for.

So Calder Park is going to be massive, but there is more work that needs to be done to the surface. They have already done plenty of work there, but until you have high-powered cars thundering down the track, you won't know how good a job they've done. Still, I'm looking forward to the Nationals that'll be held there next year.

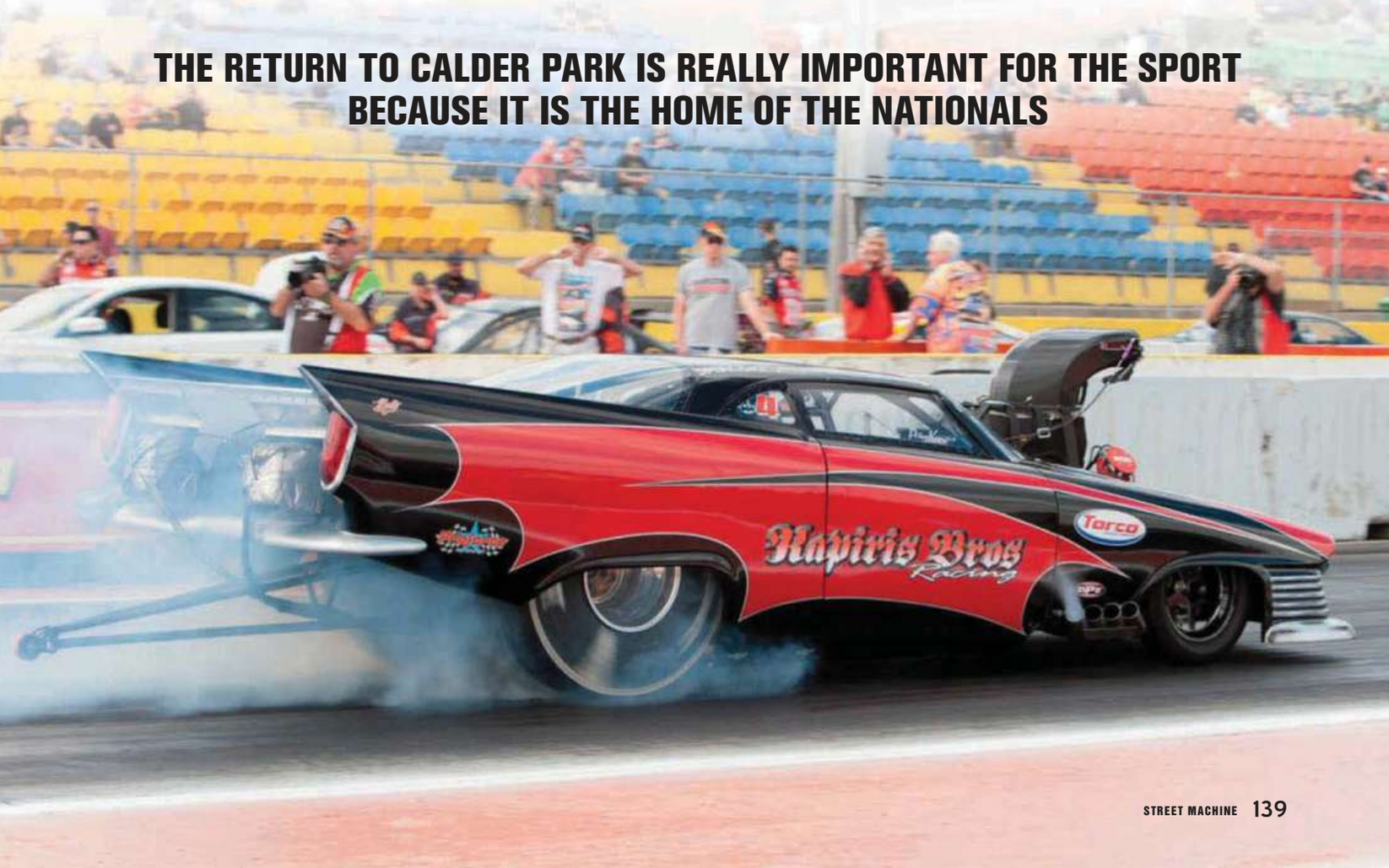
There's a good feeling that drag racing is on the comeback trail, and Team Bray wants to be part of it. Everyone will be pulling in the one direction and that's going to be a good thing for the sport.

After two rounds of the ANDRA Top Doorslammer championship, John Zappia leads the title fight, but the pressure will build. He is still the most consistent and he won't give up his winning streak lightly.

Mark Belleri is driving Maurice Fabietti's Monaro, Benny's Corvette is going well, and Grant O'Rourke put some fantastic performances together in Darwin. Peter Kapiris is right in there as well. Zap still dominates, but there will be more cars banging on his door. Would I ever be brave enough to predict this won't be John Zappia's year? No way!

Team Bray has been working hard to prepare for the East Coast Nationals. But basically, our future depends on sponsorship. We need to put major sponsorship together for this year or we will probably only be running selected events. It's sad to say, but that's the reality of the situation we find ourselves in. We are battling hard at the moment and we have some fantastic companies we are talking to, so you never know what might come up. Stay tuned.

THE RETURN TO CALDER PARK IS REALLY IMPORTANT FOR THE SPORT BECAUSE IT IS THE HOME OF THE NATIONALS



URBAN WARFARE

MARK ARBLASTER

ROAD WARRIORS

> IT'S THE ULTIMATE STREET CAR TORTURE TEST: *HOT ROD* DRAG WEEK

The Capri had some starter and fuel pump issues this year, but on the whole it was pretty reliable. Most thought we were spinning the 408ci Yates-headed Clevo much harder than 7800rpm

AMERICA'S annual cross-country street-and-strip bonanza, *Hot Rod* Drag Week, has certainly become one of the most iconic motorsport events in the world. This year a record 301 cars made the pilgrimage to Gateway Motorsports Park in Illinois for the start of the gruelling week-long event, which included racing at four drag strips over five days and over 1000 miles of driving on public roads in between.

At a grassroots street-car level, the competition was fierce, especially in the lower classes. For example, the Street Machine Eliminator class (formerly known as Daily Driver) required a 10.0-11.0sec time to be among the top 32 cars in the field – that's a damn quick street car!

Unlike previous Drag Weeks, this year there were no real headline acts in the Unlimited class, despite many cars looking good to run into the mid-fives. Larry Larson, multiple outright winner of the event, failed to front in his S10 pick-up this year. In its maiden event last year, the car ran a 4.0 on the eighth-mile, and despite claiming last year that he had built a car to take on the new line of Pro Mod composite-body cars, Larson remained on the sidelines.

Tom Bailey took last year's loss in the Project Sick Seconds Camaro on the chin, and went away to build a new Camaro that could potentially be the greatest street car of all time, with the ability to run into the mid-fives every day during Drag Week.

Larson's decision not to meet arch-rival Bailey on neutral ground for a showdown came as an enormous disappointment. Like Larson's car, Bailey's new Camaro has run bottom fours over the eighth-mile, but unlike the S10, it had no removable doors for street and race driving – hell, it even had power windows.

Unfortunately, Bailey struggled all week, at one stage making a pass on only seven cylinders. He bounced back, but retired to the pits on the last day with steam pouring from the turbo dump pipes. Engine builder Steve Morris normally rides shotgun with Tom, but broke his leg in a bike-riding accident prior to the event. His absence almost certainly made things a lot harder for Bailey.

Last year's overall winner Jeff Lutz rose to the challenge by bringing his Pro Mod Camaro to Drag Week this year. Seeing Lutz's car in the flesh, it was hard to believe it would ever make the drive; it looked like an all-out strip monster, with the interior barely covering the driveline.

To his credit, he laid down a couple of insane passes on Day One, the best being a 6.05, but the engine knocked out the big-end bearings not far into the drive that evening. Despite making an appearance later in the week, Lutz's Camaro didn't run again.

One of the most anticipated classes at Drag Week in recent years has been Pro Street Big-Block Aspirated, which was won last year by Eddie Miller in his 572ci Mopar-powered Duster. Miller is one of the more successful – and vocal – racers of the event, and was overall winner back

in 2006. He has won his class multiple times, and last year his comments that the class was soft sent ripples through the racing fraternity. His nemesis Doc McIntire responded with a 670ci billet Hemi engine with five-inch bore spacing (really a cross between a Hemi and a Chev) in his first-generation Camaro. It was rumoured to make more than 1500hp and cost over US$80,000. McIntire won the class, but with a higher average than Miller has run in the past, so this argument isn't over; watch out for fireworks if they both show up next year.

Fortunately the weather was a lot cooler this year, with only one day nudging the high 30s, so the drive stages were a lot more bearable, with around 280 miles covered (450km) on most days. The drives were broken up with deviations to some pretty cool checkpoints that were off the beaten track.

The course on your daily map (which you received once you handed in your timeslip for the day) needed to be followed to the letter. While 450km doesn't sound that much of a drive, it is when you are sitting in a car with 4.3 gears. Just sitting on 60mph (100km/h) is quite an accomplishment, and we found ourselves stumbling through the doors most nights well after 1.30am, and as late as 4am one morning.

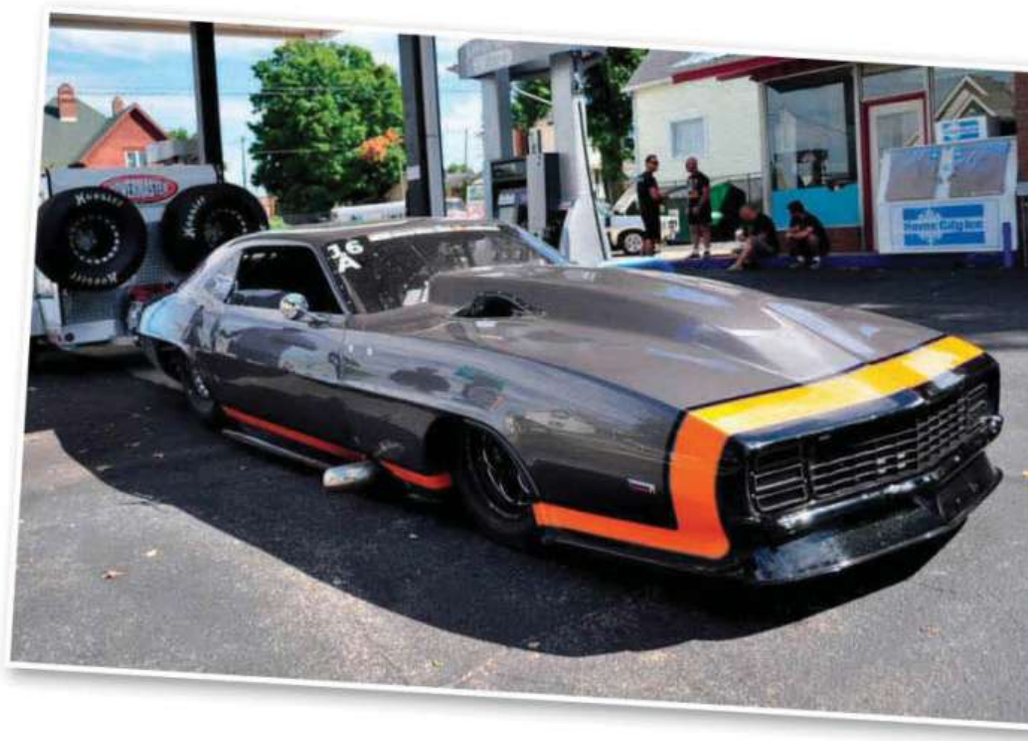
It was brilliant to have such a large contingent of Aussies taking part this year and there were many highs and lows. John Faraone struggled with breakdowns but must have been ecstatic to punch his twin-turbo Charger through the top end with an incredible 7.43 and 192mph at Cordova.

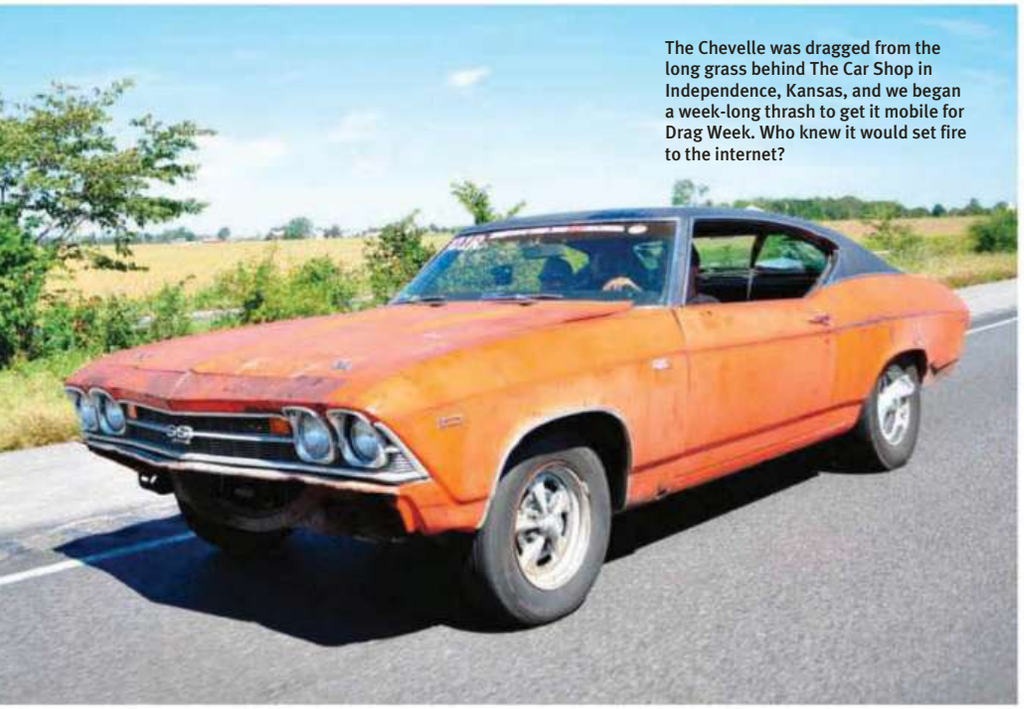
One of the great stories of the week was seeing Brian and Dianne Jensen finish third in the Street Race Big-Block Aspirated class. They came over in 2013 and 2014 as spectators to get the lay of the land, and to his credit, Brian totally rebuilt the car and engine before shipping it over with Greg Trapnell's HQ to his buddies at 417 Motorsport. He did have some big problems with the carby early on in the week, caused by E85 corrosion, but the car had very few issues compared to most. It's really an incredible accomplishment for them, and they have left the car in the USA with plans to return a few weeks before the event next year, to freshen the engine for another crack.

The Trapnell team certainly had their share of problems too, but should be congratulated for getting there and finishing the event. Their Monaro arrived in the States needing a transmission overhaul by M&M Transmissions in Jefferson City, Missouri, and it was then discovered that the new engine had torched a couple of pistons during testing back in Australia. The boys at 417 Motorsports welded a new 'cage into the car, but when the new pistons arrived it became apparent that they had been incorrectly ordered, so they ended up having to patch up the old motor. It was disappointing that the Monaro didn't reach its potential – it ran 9.70s most of the week – but the lads thrashed

ABOVE: Jeff Lutz was favourite to win the event after he ripped off a 6.05@251mph on Day One at Gateway Motorsports Park, but trouble on the drive put him out of the competition. Will we see a three-way battle between Bailey, Lutz and Larson next year?

BELOW: Tom Bailey's Sick Seconds 2.0 took the outright honours this year with an average of 6.78@219mph – that's the quickest and fastest Drag Week average ever. It wasn't a trouble-free run, though. At some tracks Tom was on just seven cylinders, and the front tyres rubbed their way through the top of the front clip





The Chevelle was dragged from the long grass behind The Car Shop in Independence, Kansas, and we began a week-long thrash to get it mobile for Drag Week. Who knew it would set fire to the internet?

JOHN FARAONE MUST HAVE BEEN ECSTATIC TO PUNCH HIS CHARGER THROUGH THE TOP END WITH AN INCREDIBLE 7.43@192MPH

on the car the whole week and made it all the way through.

Steve Reimann and I teamed up once again in the Capri, and after running second in the Street Race Small Block Aspirated class last year we were hopeful of a better result after a few years of transmission issues.

We arrived to find that the TH350, which had been rebuilt under warranty, was still dragging when you launched with the transbrake – the same issue that had plagued the car last year. We took the car to M&M Transmissions to have it repaired.

We added a two-step so we could leave on wide-open throttle, but struggled with the car frying the tyres on the startline. Our class had certainly stepped up, and unless you were running into the 9.40s you weren't in with a shot. We had run into the high nines before, but could not catch the leader this year so were happy with low 10s, taking it easy on the car to make sure we finished. Aside from fuel supply issues caused by a blocked pick-up in the tank, the car ran faultlessly.

Harry Haig, Brett Ford and Shannon Jennings were originally going to take Reimann's other car, a 500ci 1963 Dodge, but ended up using a 1969 Chevelle that we dragged out of the weeds from behind The Car Shop. They had one hell of a time throughout the week, after a huge thrash to get the car going.

Unfortunately the boys were disqualified for not running the exact course as set out in the daily drive sheets. It was a cruel blow, especially after getting through the whole week, but the lads had a blast and have plans to get Lutz to do some work on the car during the year, which will probably include a bigger engine combination.

> CALENDAR

WILLOWBANK
21 OCT Test & Tune
24 OCT Test & Tune
25 OCT Racer Test Day
31 OCT Test & Tune
06 NOV Test & Tune
07 NOV Test & Tune
08 NOV Mopar Tune
11 NOV Test & Tune
www.willowbankraceway.com.au
Phone (07) 5461 5461

SYDNEY DRAGWAY
21 OCT Race 4 Real
25 OCT Sunday Street Meet
28 OCT Race 4 Real
29 OCT End of Month Meet
30 OCT Full Throttle Friday
31 OCT Test & Tune
04 NOV Race 4 Real
07-08 NOV East Coast Nationals
11 NOV Race 4 Real
www.wsid.com.au
Phone (02) 9421 0700

CALDER PARK
24 OCT Jamboree
25 OCT ANDRA Sunday Funday
03 NOV ANDRA State Round/Street Outlaws Finals
07-08 NOV Fastrack Racing
13 NOV ANDRA Fast Friday
www.calderpark.com.au

PORTLAND
23 OCT All Burnouts Night
24 OCT *Street Machine* Drag Challenge; Test & Tune
www.southcoastraceway.com

PERTH MOTORPLEX
23 OCT Sportsman Speedway & Drag Racing
24 OCT BadASS Burnouts
31 OCT Drag Racing Grand Opening
07 NOV Magic Man 34 & Demo Derby
www.motorplex.com.au

PALMYRA DRAGWAY
30 OCT Keep Speed Off The Streets
31 OCT Round 8 Champs
13 NOV Keep Speed Off The Streets
www.palmyradragway.com.au
Phone 0400 592 893

BENARABY RACEWAY
23 OCT Off Street Meet
24 OCT Round 6 CQDRA Champs
www.benarabyraceway.com

HEATHCOTE RACEWAY
25 OCT Test & Tune
08 NOV Test & Tune
13 NOV Test & Tune
www.heathcoteraceway.com.au

IRONBARK RACEWAY
31 OCT Finals of Ironbark Raceway 2015 Champs
www.swdra.hwy54.com.au

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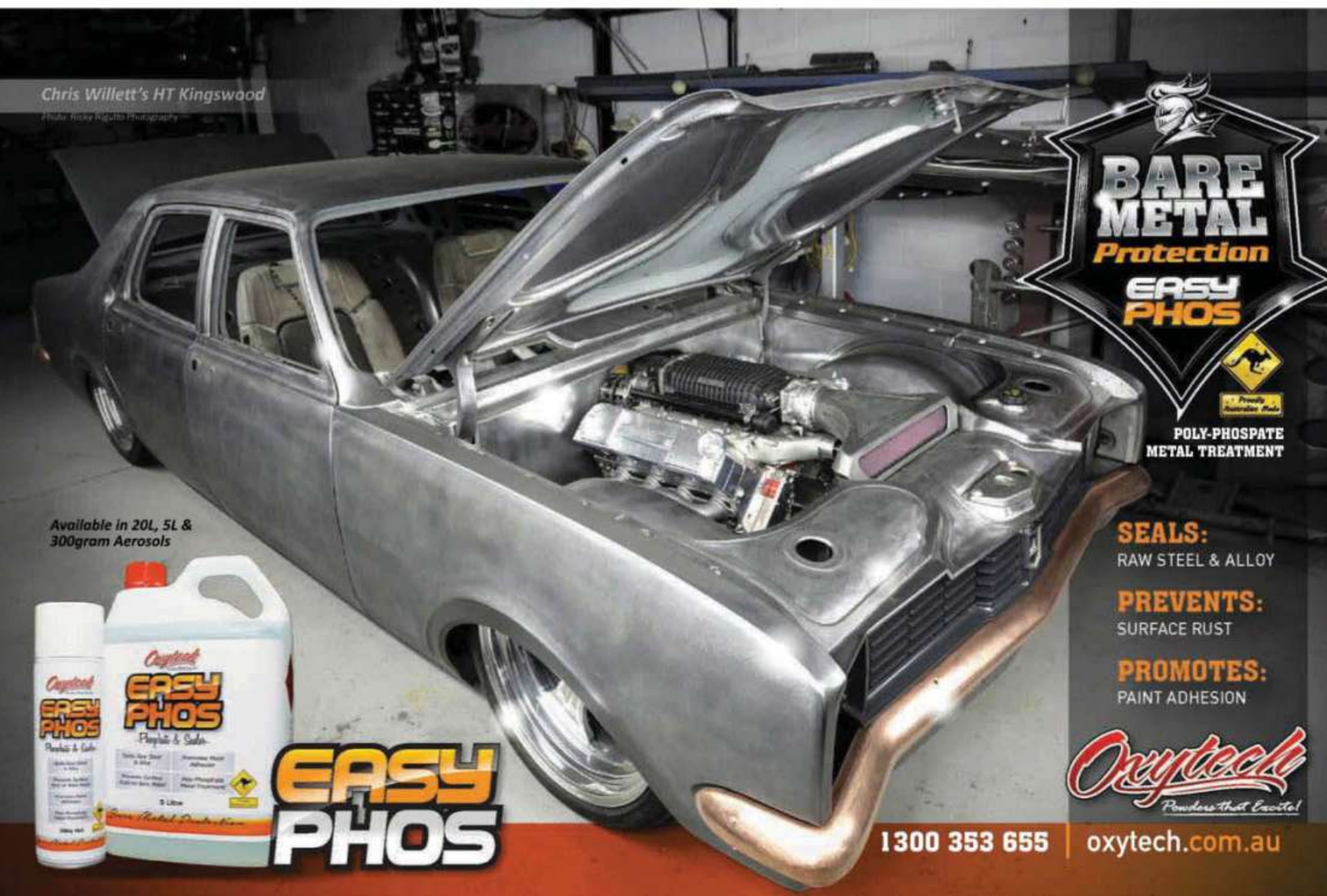

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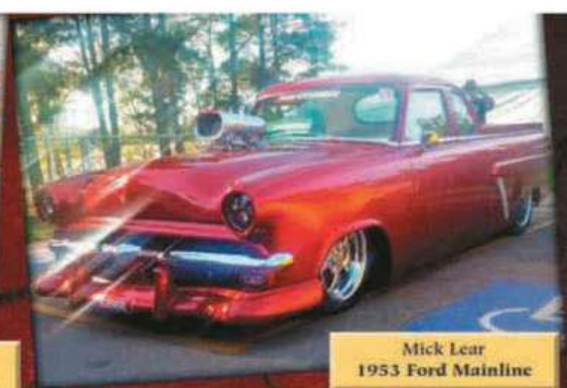
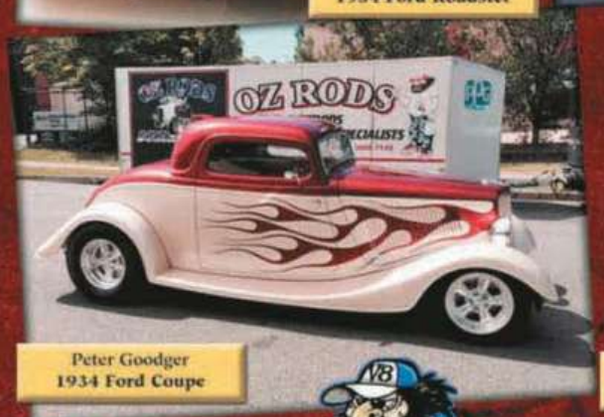
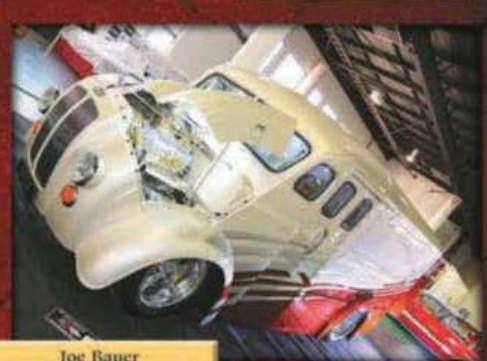
Sonia Piggins
1934 Ford Roadster



Mick Lear
1953 Ford Mainline



Peter Goodger
1934 Ford Coupe



Joe Bauer
1954 Divco Milk Truck

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APSA TOP 10 LISTS

TO GET on the Australian Pro Street Association Top 10 lists fax your time card to Simon Kryger on (02) 9651 4041. See www.austprostassc.com.au.

PRO STREET BLOWN

D Luppino/G Forster	**6.69/219.51**	**632ci Ford T Mustang**
Peter Pisalidis	6.83/208.81	440ci Chev T Camaro
Craig Hewitt	6.87/202.03	Holden Monaro SC
Steve Athans	6.96/190.08	572ci Chev Mustang TT
Karl Wicht	7.26/189.55	555ci Chev B LX Torana
Tommy Raikko	7.30/198.82	400ci Chev T LJ Torana
Paolo Todarello	7.51/186.95	400ci Ford T Cortina
Michael McGrath	7.55/182.01	555ci Chev N LJ Torana
Nathan Hagerson	7.83/181.57	2JZ Toyota T RX2 Mazda
Adam Smolders	7.90/171.40	427ci NOS Ford Capri

PRO STREET UNBLOWN

J Somma/T Papadopoulos	**7.93/168.24**	**440ci Ford Cortina**
Tony Nicolaci	8.01/168.70	602ci Chev LX Torana
Geoff Campbell-Brown	8.10/166.68	434ci LH Torana
Andrew Milford	8.25/163.41	452ci Chev LC Torana
N Dalipi/C Brewer	8.30/162.65	632ci Chev Mustang
Barry Hall	8.39/160.18	598ci Chev HZ Holden
Paul Beauchamp	8.30/156.75	350ci Chev '87 Pontiac
Chris Stevermuer	8.48/158.91	598ci Chev LJ Torana
Darren Edwards	8.72/152.92	540ci Chev HT Monaro
Darryl Dando	8.91/151.85	611ci Ford XT Falcon

MODIFIED STREET BLOWN

Joe Gauci	**7.15/202.27**	**372ci Ford T Cortina**
Stuart Henry	7.21/195.17	615ci Chev N Capri
P Pronesti/M Hayes	7.31/190.94	632ci Chev N LJ Torana
Michael Arnold	7.43/188.49	378ci Chev B HT ute
Johnny Wilson	7.53/176.21	622ci Chev N LH Torana
Mick Voase	7.54/194.27	555ci Chev N LX Torana
Paul Cibotto	7.64/188.96	347ci Ford T Mustang
Brett Benz	7.87/179.42	400ci Chev T VL Calais
Greg Tsakiridis	7.87/173.09	430ci Ford N RX4 Mazda
Anthony Fichera	8.04/173.36	350ci Chev T LH Torana

MODIFIED STREET UNBLOWN

Danny Sharban	**7.67/179.64**	**632ci Chev Capri**
Mick Brody	7.86/172.39	622ci Chev LX Torana
Tony Cusolito	7.88/178.00	638ci Chev Capri
Kon Michaloudakis	8.28/163.28	632ci Chev Capri
John Habib	8.47/160.73	632ci Chev Torana
Mark Drew	8.47/160.65	622ci Chev LX Torana
Leo Vangelovski	8.49/159.80	485ci Chev LH Torana
Andrew Halstead	8.55/163.55	622ci Chev HQ Monaro
Wayne Lear	8.54/157.30	582ci Chev LX Torana
Pier Baiocchi	8.89/150.23	434ci Chev LX Torana

TRUE STREET

Anthony O'Connor	**8.53/157.63**	**412ci Ford XD Falcon**
Dean McMahon	8.60/158.33	440ci Ford XF Falcon
Andrew Searl	8.70/156.35	427ci Ford XE Falcon
Janelle Scott	8.96/150.68	420ci Chev LX Torana
Anthony Visintin	9.09/147.91	447ci Ford XE Falcon
Jason Benz	9.12/148.72	427ci Chev VL Calais
Greg Aitken	9.40/143.52	434ci Chev LX Torana
N Bonikos/T Cusolito	9.43/146.56	460ci Chev HX Holden
Shane Elvin	9.45/141.11	408ci Chry-Rambler Hornet
Peter Haravitsidis	9.64/137.76	411ci Ford XY GT Falcon

RADIAL OUTLAW

Daniel Nunziante	**7.00/220.66**	**600ci Ford T Cortina**
Michael Kalaitzakis	7.09/210.67	525ci Chev T Supra
Marc Leake	7.29/196.63	622ci Chev T LX Torana
Steve Bezzina	7.38/194.49	435ci TT Ford Fairmont
James Horan	7.43/190.35	240ci Toyota T Hilux
Perry Bullivant	7.44/202.52	400ci Chev T LX Torana
F Marchese/J Gauci	7.75/190.11	370ci Ford T XY Falcon
Frank Canistra	7.82/172.06	13B Mazda T RX3 Mazda
Nathan Farrugia	7.83/178.97	427ci Chev T RX3 Mazda
Shane Crichton	7.87/174.03	2JZ Toyota T Toyota Cressida

10.5 OUTLAW

Paul Mouhayet	**6.08/244.52**	**526ci Ford Mustang TT**
Robert Campisi	6.28/235.35	632ci Ford Mustang TT
Frank Mamone	6.38/229.47	427ci Hemi Nova SC
S French/S Sarkis	6.39/234.00	540KB Pontiac SC
Simon Kryger	6.59/208.97	864ci Chev 68 Camaro N

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STAGE WRITE

BOB KOTMEL

LAST issue I mentioned the car show I attended at Pigeon Forge, Tennessee. I couldn't get over the unbelievable cars there that were truly street-driven. Sure, some cars arrived in trailers, but I saw so many tough hot rods, muscle cars and cruisers being driven to the show in sweltering-hot bumper-to-bumper traffic. The car parks were full of killer rides, and the sound of whining blowers and blaring exhausts was par for the course.

The rules to get a car registered in the US, especially if it was built before 1973, are so lenient compared to Australia. For most US states, a DMV inspection requires a steering and suspension check, working brakes, handbrake, indicators, horn, mirrors, treaded tyres, windshield wipers, defroster, rear number plate light, seatbelts, and a floorpan with no holes (so exhaust gases can't enter the cabin). Post-'73 cars are meant to have the original pollution equipment hooked up, but that's clearly not the case in some states. There is no decibel requirement for exhaust noise, either. I believe California is one state with tougher rules though, especially when it comes to pollution.

These lenient road laws allow for some really unusual trends. What I noticed was that some of the 4WDs have really wide wheels. The tyres hang out way past the guards, and they jack them up sky-high so the tyres don't scrape. They're like street-registered monster trucks!

Another extreme was fitting really big-diameter super-low-profile tyres and wheels. Couldn't help but think that the wheels were worth more than the rest of the car in some cases! And I still don't think they look 'right' on tri-five Chevs, but that's just my opinion.

At the Pigeon Forge show I enjoyed seeing two cars that appeared in the 60s TV series *The Munsters*: the George Barris-built Drag-U-La hot rod and the Munster Koach. I happened to run into Butch Patrick, the actor who played young Eddie Munster in the series. He was there to autograph photos, and said he's coming to Australia shortly to check out the Drag-U-La replica that Brisbane's David Scott recently debuted at MotorEx. Keep an eye open for Butch at shows in Adelaide, Melbourne and Brisbane – tell him you read about him in *Street Machine*!

Something that I couldn't help but notice was how good the chrome was on many of the cars. The US chrome seems to be of better quality than we have in Australia. Also, the paint is outstanding in many cases – no runs, and the colour seems so deep and rich.

I spoke with a couple of hot rod owners and asked them how they

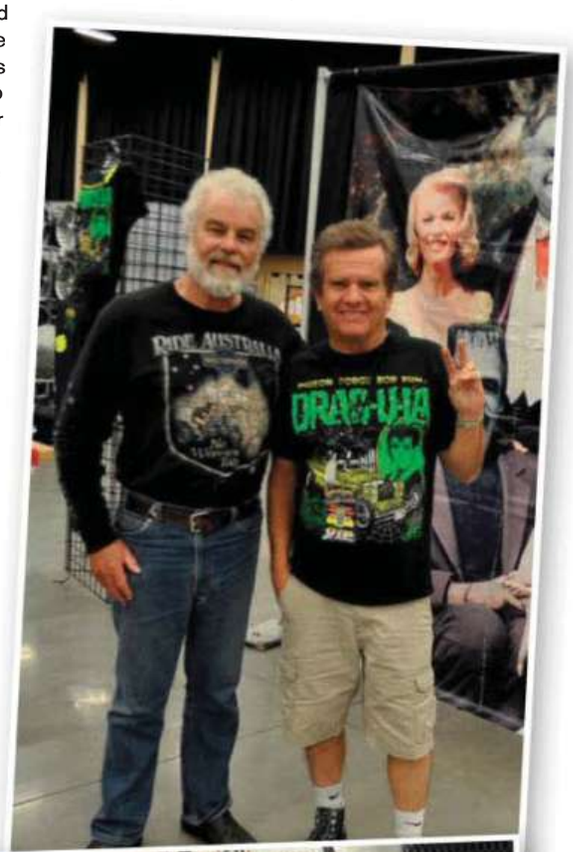
I SAW THE GEORGE BARRIS-BUILT DRAG-U-LA HOT ROD AND THE MUNSTER KOACH, BOTH FROM *THE MUNSTERS*. I ALSO RAN INTO BUTCH PATRICK, THE ACTOR WHO PLAYED YOUNG EDDIE MUNSTER IN THE SERIES

get on with the heat. They said that many hot rods have all the mod cons, like air conditioning and power steering. A lot of the hot rod owners were elderly couples who enjoy travelling around the country to the shows. What a great life! Certainly a lot more fun than sitting in front of the TV waiting to fall off the perch.

If you wanted parts, there were stalls set up selling heaps of second-hand stuff. Searching for a brand-new chrome bumper for a '57 Chev? It was there, along with second-hand Muncie four-speeds. Brand-new Chevy HEI distributors were on sale for $40, along with new Holley carbs and Edelbrock fuel injection set-ups.

After the car show, I headed back to Lynchburg to say goodbye to Sonny Leonard and the guys at the shop. As I was about to go inside, I heard the familiar sound of a mountain motor on the strainer. It was a 940-cube naturally aspirated EFI engine out of a dragster. They were just shy of 2000hp, and had been running the total timing at 25°. Sonny put another 1.5° into it, and on the next pull the motor went 2003hp – 60hp more than what it had when it came into the shop. The customer will be very happy!

Before I flew back to Australia, Sonny wanted to show me a single-four-barrel EFI pump gas engine they'd just dynoed. The numbers were almost identical whether they used high-octane race fuel or 93-octane pump gas. The mountain motor is making over 2hp per cube, and I'll devote a column to this mill in a future Stage Write.



IN GEAR

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02 BABY GOT BACK

RECKON your rear end is letting you down? You're probably not alone. RRS has a solution for XE to EL Falcon owners, though, with their recently completed first install of a three-link rear end with mini coil-overs and Watt's linkage. The folks at RRS have engineered a clever shock-mount plate and recessed bolts for easy installation. The Trans Am three-link is 1200hp-rated and is covered by a five-year warranty. Contact (02) 9907 3755 for info.

03 ON THE CARDS

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05 DRILL THRILL

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06 N2GO

A NITROUS plate system is the easiest way to install a nitrous system, and it can improve horsepower while maintaining strong reliability – just check out these systems. The Wilson nitrous plate systems are suitable for all engines, in 50hp to more than 600hp versions. The systems are pre-wired and incorporate purge systems. Available with burst panels and fan-spray-tube technology. For further info visit www.competitionengines.com.au or call (03) 9548 5116.

07 BLUE LIGHT DISCO

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STORY AIDEN TAYLOR PHOTOS STEVE KELLY

ADAM REEVES HK KINGSWOOD

> MEADOWBROOK, QLD

SOON after Adam Reeves sold his HK about 10 years ago, he experienced an emotion well-known to many street machiners: seller's remorse. Determined to right that wrong, Adam found this very tidy HK Kingswood, which now hides a tough VN-headed Holden 383 under the bonnet good for 580hp!

Tough HK! How'd you get it to this stage?
In 2011 I spotted one for sale on the internet down in Toowoomba. It was a rough six-banger cruiser that was about five different shades of white, with pretty bad rust damage – which had been repaired poorly! A year later she was ripped apart and underwent a three-year rebuild, which included replacing the full windscreen cowl, floor panels and a few other important bits. It was a big job.

With all that body work you must've played with the engine too?
Yeah, the trusty old 186 and three-speed combo is long gone. I always wanted a VN-headed combo, so I got a Holden 304, which was then built to 383 cubes by PHAT Engines. It has a solid-roller cam with COME 590-series alloy heads, Probe forged slugs and a COME rotating assembly. The Harrop single-plane manifold has had a bit of work done to it, including removing all the runner webbing for better heat release. All up this engine puts out over 580hp, which is a lot more than I had originally planned, but Phil Wedrat and the PHAT Engines crew blew me away with their talents.

What did you do for the exhaust?
Phil from PHAT Engines hooked me up with Les, Scotty and Chris at Fat Pipes Custom Exhausts. Since no one does a quality set of headers for plastic-powered HKs, the boys started from scratch and built the custom 1⅞in headers. The 3.5in X-piped system with stainless mufflers and resonators finishes things off perfectly.

What transmission are you using?
She has a Stef's Race Glides full-manual transbraked 'Glide fronted by an eight-inch TCE 4500rpm converter. There's a custom 3.5-inch driveshaft made up of chrome-moly 1350 yokes, unis and weld ends from Strange Engineering, and it has a nine-inch in the rear with 4.11 Motive gears in a nodular carrier with a Strange 1350-series chrome-moly pinion yoke. It's all supported by a custom set of Fireball Custom Fabrication traction bars built by Andy McConnell.

The interior is really tidy – almost looks factory fresh.
Greg Anderson at Spectrim Auto Interiors on the Gold Coast took care of the trim. It took me three goes to decide on the final colour, but after that my only instruction was no front armrests and to keep to the original style. He nailed it better than I could have imagined.

It looks pretty stealthy from the outside;

Got a car that looks mild, but goes wild? Send pics, car details and contact details to: Sleepers, *Street Machine*, Locked Bag 12, Oakleigh, Vic 3166. Or email: streetmachine@bauer-media.com.au.

FANTASTIC PLASTIC: Adam's Kingswood runs a venerable Holden 304 with VN-style heads by COME Racing, and has been given a tickle-up by PHAT Engines for a capacity of 383ci. The QFT 850cfm double-pumper carby supplies the engine with BP 98 from a custom fuel cell sitting in the boot

love the steel hubcaps!

Well our original goal was to run 11s on hubcaps. I wanted to keep it looking nice and simple. The only change from factory is the four-inch Alfa Motorsport Fibreglass cowl scoop – more for necessity than for fashion. Same with the paint; I didn't want anything attention-grabbing, so we stuck with two-pack Ermine White to keep the exterior clean.

What's next on the agenda?

I'm hanging out to get her on the track! It'll be getting a tune shortly as it's absolutely chewing through juice at the moment, then I'll race it for the first time and hopefully get that 11-second pass at Willowbank Raceway. Once I get that I might see if it'll go 10s – on hubcaps – by switching to E85 and upping the compression to around 14:1. The guys at PHAT Engines reckon it could make around 630hp then.

I'M HANGING OUT TO GET HER ON THE TRACK; HOPEFULLY I CAN GET AN 11SEC PASS. IF I DO I MIGHT SEE IF IT'LL GO 10S – ON HUBCAPS!

READERS' ROCKETS

SEND photos of your car and a few details of what went into the build to Readers' Rockets, *Street Machine,* Locked Bag 12, Oakleigh, Vic 3166 or email readerscars@bauer-media.com.au. Please note: Send us copies of prints as we are unable to return your photos.

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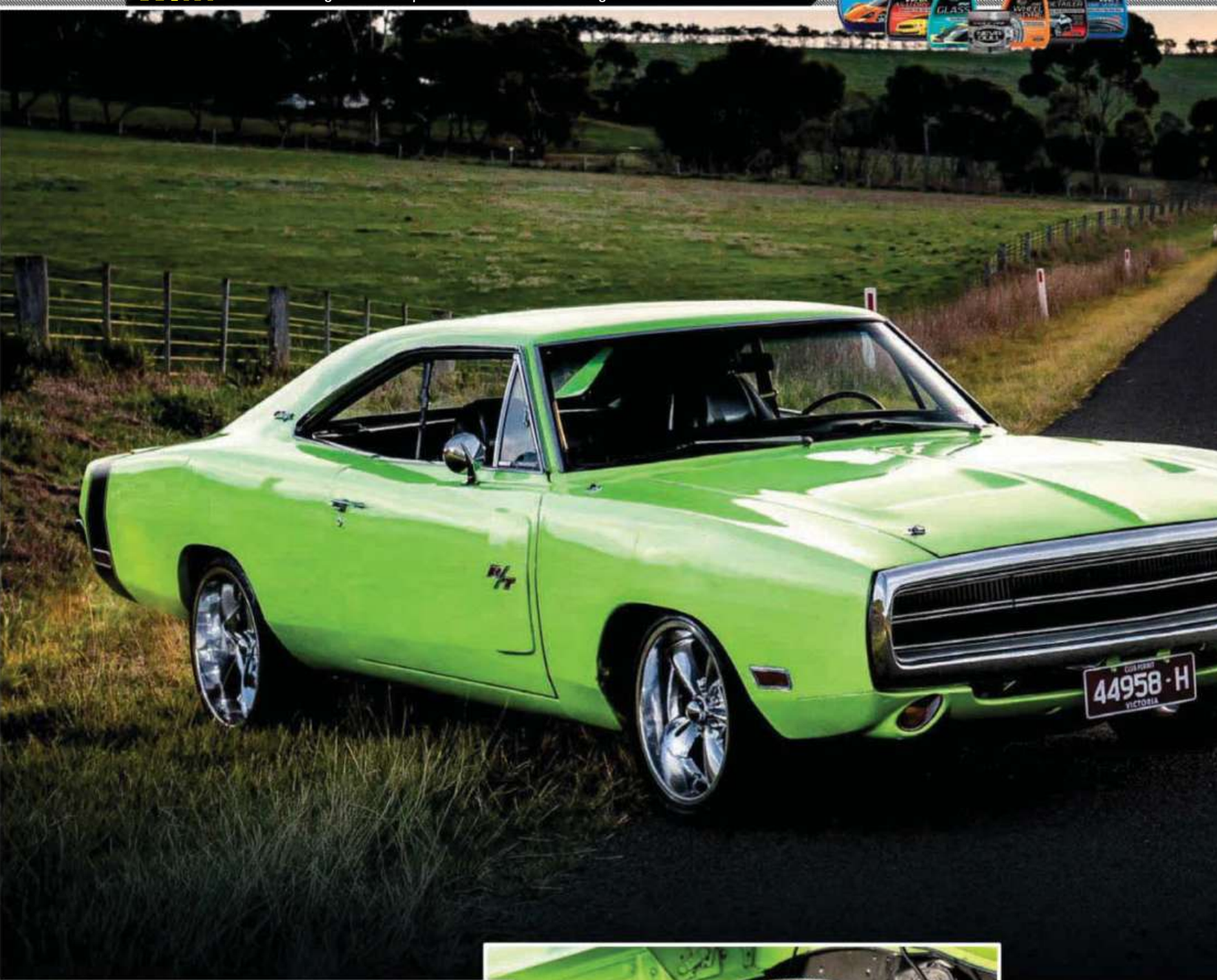

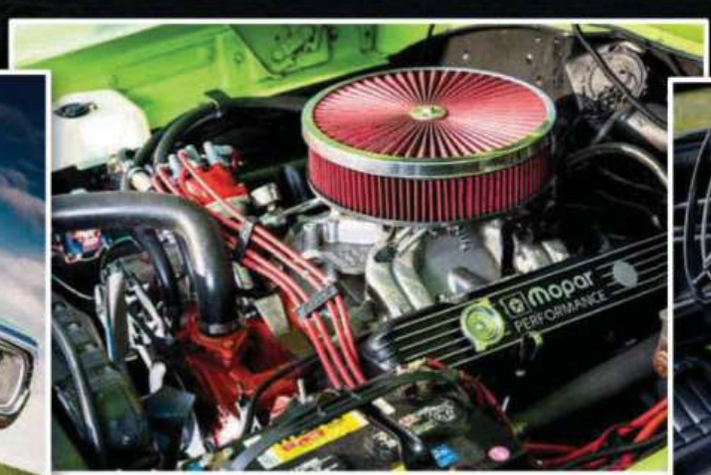

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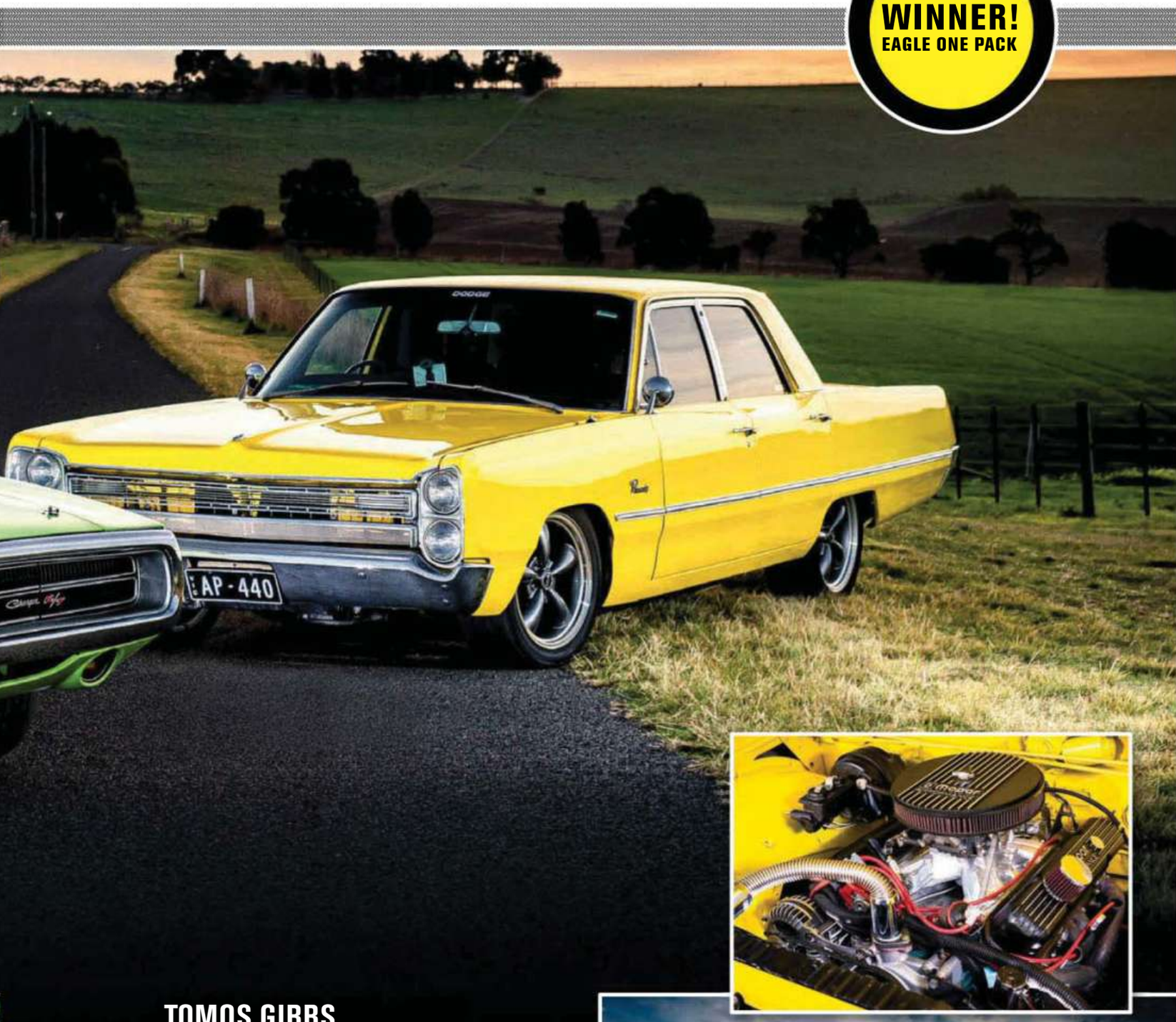


TOMOS GIBBS
1970 DODGE CHARGER & 1967 DODGE PHOENIX

"MY SUBLIME green '70 Charger runs a 440 with an Elgin cam topped by a Holley 750 double-pumper. Hooker headers take care of the waste gases, and wheels are 18x8 on the front and 20x10 rear. The '67 Phoenix used to have a 318 but now runs a 383 with 30thou-over pistons and a Mutha Thumpr cam, with a 670 Holley on top. Trans is a 727 Torqueflite, and it's had a four-wheel disc-brake conversion." Photos: Greg Forster

MICHAEL GEORGE
VH COMMODORE SL

"MY 1983 VH SL was originally my dad's race car, but he felt the time had come to sell it, so I decided to take it off his hands. It had a 202 in it, but now runs a mildly worked 253 out of an HQ. I've added a High Energy sump, stage 3 Crow cam kit, Edelbrock manifold, 600cfm vac-sec Holley, Pacemaker extractors with a 2¼-inch system, three-core aluminium radiator and forged conrods. It is a factory manual, but it blew up a few Aussie four-speeds, so my dad put a reconditioned XF Falcon four-speed in it. The paint and interior is still all original and is in great condition. It sits on 20-inch MC Racing wheels and the suspension has been upgraded and set up for racing, so it handles like it's on rails, even with the 20s."

MICHAEL DOVIAK
CHRYSLER CENTURA

"MY CENTURA has a solid-cam engine running on avgas, and there's a NOS system onboard too for when I need an extra jolt. Trans is a T350 with 4000rpm stall, running to a four-pinion LSD with 3.89:1 gears. Strengthened, adjustable suspension smooths over any bumps. Inside there's custom VE HSV GTS seats, and all the fruit."

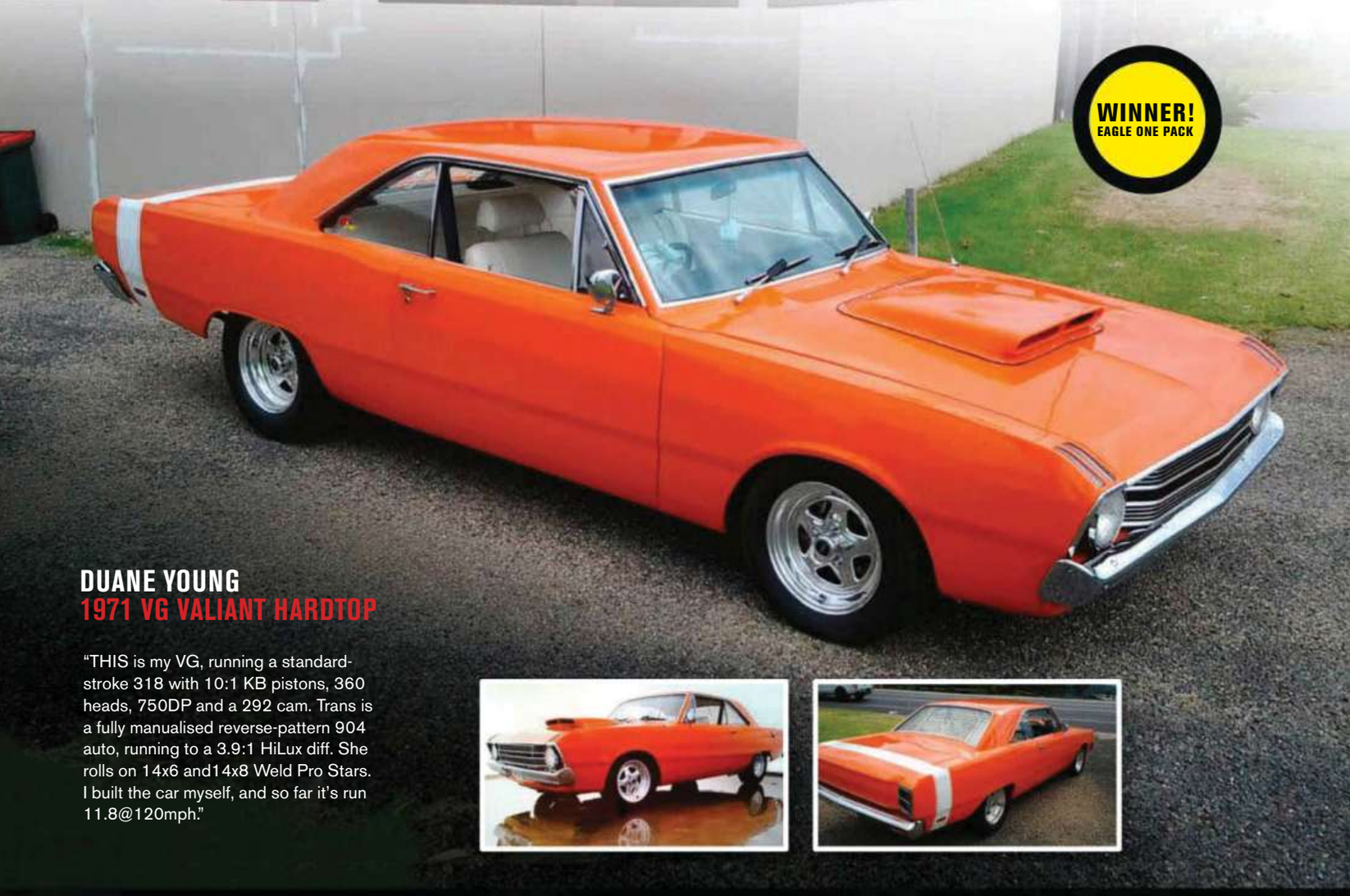
JOSH & CHANTELLE ALLGOOD
1973 HQ PREMIER & 1976 LX TORANA

"HERE'S my HQ Premier sedan. I got it three years ago for my 13th birthday. I'd always wanted an HQ Prem but with prices creeping up and having seen a lot of shells that looked like they were just pulled out of creeks, I was beginning to think I'd have to settle for a standard HQ sedan and swap the front end over. But then one day I came home from school and there she was! After long talks with the owner – who had plans to molest it by turning it into a tube-chassis drag car – I picked her up. I plan to give her a complete ground-up rebuild, including an LS1 conversion backed by a TH400, and eventually I'll replace the 10-bolt with a nine-inch. My mum recently realised a 25-year dream of owning an LX Torana sedan. She's a bit more old-school than me, so her plans are for a tough 253/Aussie four-speed combo!"

NICK FERRY
XY FALCON UTE

"THIS is my XY ute. I would love to have taken it down to Red Centre Nats, but work commitments meant I was stuck here in Tennant Creek, 450km away. My grandfather bought the car brand new and left it to me when he passed away. Since then I've had it tidied up a bit, thanks to Pete Hondow of Custom Automotive in Alice Springs. The duco has been touched up and the engine is now a 393ci Cleveland. I'm just the present-day custodian of it; it looks like the kids have already claimed it!"

WINNER!
EAGLE ONE PACK



WINNER!
EAGLE ONE PACK

DUANE YOUNG
1971 VG VALIANT HARDTOP

"THIS is my VG, running a standard-stroke 318 with 10:1 KB pistons, 360 heads, 750DP and a 292 cam. Trans is a fully manualised reverse-pattern 904 auto, running to a 3.9:1 HiLux diff. She rolls on 14x6 and14x8 Weld Pro Stars. I built the car myself, and so far it's run 11.8@120mph."

LIAM TATCHELL
2002 VX COMMODORE

"WITH a custom fibreglass bonnet, Monaro headlights and tail-lights, blue LED lights in the cab, and lowered springs combined with 18-inch MNM Zinger rims, my VX definitely turns heads. A four-channel Fusion amp and 12-inch sub in the boot with a double-DIN Alpine head unit makes for sweet-sounding music. Under the hood I have a cold-air intake system and a full extractor twin system for a nice growl. It's definitely a great first car!"

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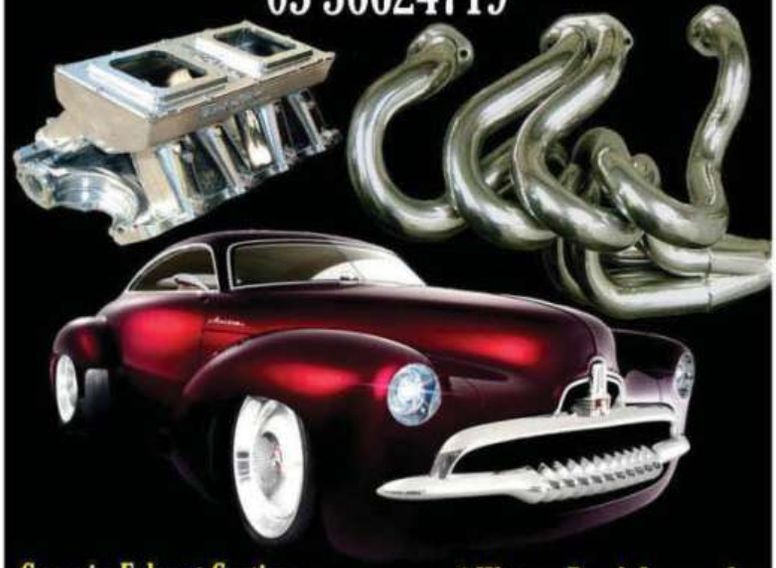

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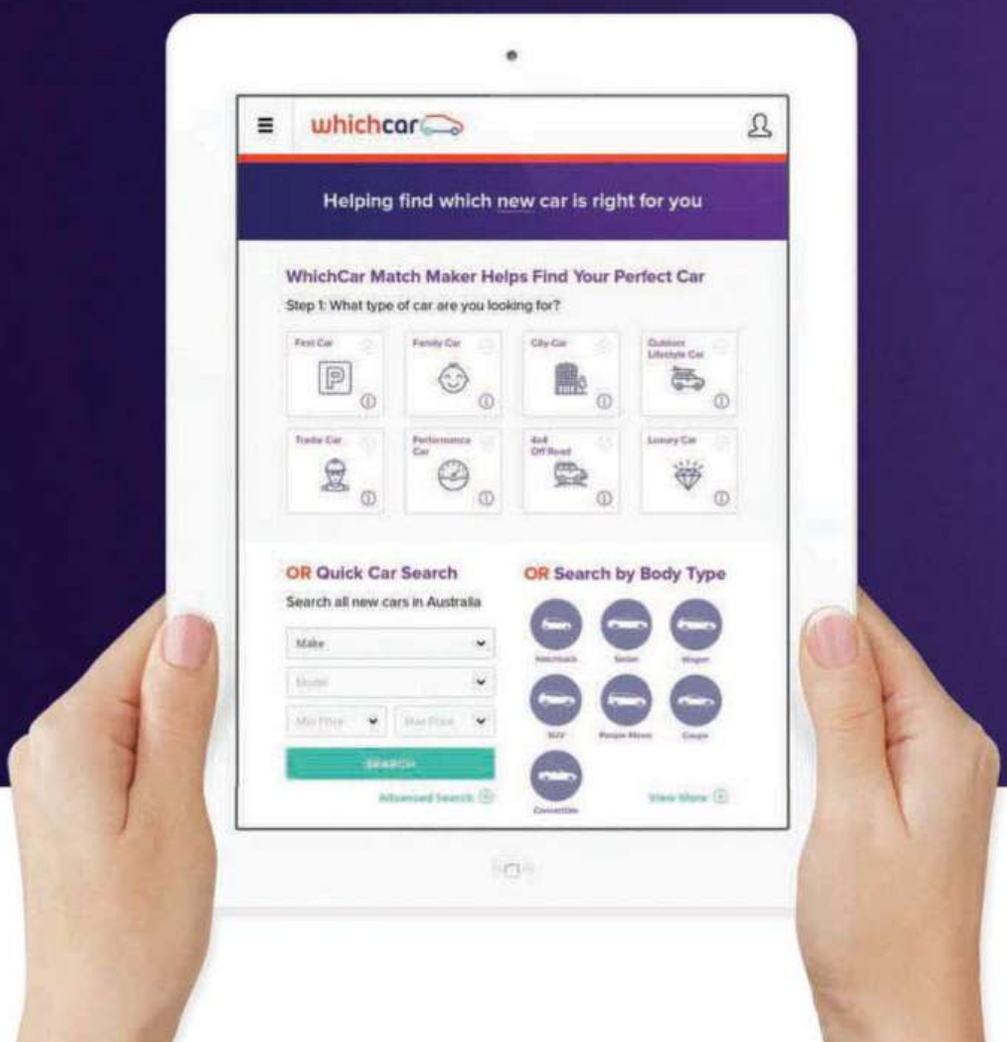

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LOL

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> FUNNY FOTO

Well, there's only one way to find out...

> GAG OF THE MONTH

ONE OF THOSE DAYS

A MAN walked into a bar and ordered a triple scotch. The bartender poured him the drink and the man drank it down in one gulp.

"Wow," the bartender exclaimed, "something bad must have happened."

"It sure did," the man replied. "I came home early today, went up to the bedroom, and there was my wife having sex with my best friend."

The bartender poured the man another triple shot. "This one's on the house." The man gulped it down once again. The bartender asked: "Did you say anything to your wife?"

"Yeah, I walked up to her and told her we were through," the man replied. "'Pack your bags and get out,' I told her."

"And what about your best friend?" the bartender asked.

"I looked him straight in the eye and said: 'Bad dog!'"

Kay Neinn, email

A REAL HERO

AN IRISHMAN, a Kiwi and an American were standing on the roof of a building, with an awning below them.

The American said to the Irishman: "I bet I could jump off this roof, land on the awning and bounce back up here onto the roof." So he jumped off, hit the awning, and was soon back on the roof. "There. Now you try," he said to the Irishman.

So the Irishman jumped off, bounced off the awning, and fell to the ground with a splat.

The Kiwi said to the American: "Jeez, Superman, you're a real jerk sometimes!"

L Luthor, email

NO REGRETS

AN ELDERLY man goes into confession and says to the priest: "Father, I'm 80 years old, married, have four kids and 11 grandchildren. But I started taking this new Viagra pill, and last night made love to two 20-year-old girls. Twice each."

The priest says: "Well, my son, when was the last time you were in confession?"

"Never, Father, I'm Jewish," the old man replies.

"So then, why are you telling me?"

"Because I'm telling everybody!"

Ida Bowstoo, email

WORKING IT OUT

WHEN Joe's wife ran away he got so depressed that his doctor sent him to see a psychiatrist. Joe told the psychiatrist his troubles. "Life isn't worth living," he moaned.

"Don't be stupid, Joe," the psychiatrist replied. "Let work be your salvation. I want you to totally submerge yourself in your work. Now, what do you do for a living?"

Joe replied: "I clean out septic tanks."

May Bereit, email

PLANNING AHEAD

AN ELDERLY woman decided to have her portrait painted. She told the artist: "Paint me with diamond earrings, a diamond necklace, emerald bracelets, a ruby broach, and a gold Rolex."

"But you're not wearing any of those things," the artist replied.

"I know," she said. "It's in case I should die before my husband. I know that bastard will remarry right away, and I want his new wife to go crazy looking for the jewellery."

Verrique Leffer, email

ENGINE TROUBLE

FIFTEEN minutes into a flight from Perth to Melbourne, the captain announced: "Ladies and gentlemen, one of our engines has failed, but there's nothing to worry about. Our flight will take an hour longer than scheduled, but we still have three engines left."

Half an hour later the captain announced: "One more engine has failed; the flight will take an additional two hours. But don't worry, we can fly just fine on two engines."

An hour later the captain announced: "One more engine has failed and our arrival will be delayed another three hours. But don't worry, we still have one engine left."

A young blonde passenger turned to the man next to her and remarked: "If we lose one more engine, we'll be up here all day!"

Will Weandede, email

POSITIVITY

A MAN walks into a bar and notices he's the only one there, apart from the bartender, who's on the phone. The bartender signals that he'll be with him in a minute. The man nods and takes a seat at the bar to wait. Suddenly, he hears a little voice say: "Hey, you're looking pretty sharp today. New suit?"

The man looks around but can't see anyone else in the place. He hears the voice again. "Seriously, you are looking good, chum. Have you lost weight?"

The man looks around again and still doesn't see anyone. "Hello?" he asks. "Is someone speaking to me?"

"You bet! I just had to say that I thought you were looking just super!" A bunch of other tiny voices suddenly rise in agreement.

The man realises now that these voices are coming from a bowl of beer nuts on the bar in front of him. He stares at them as the bartender finally hangs up and comes to serve him. "What'll you have?" he asks the man.

"What? Oh, a pint of ale, I guess," the man mutters, still staring at the nuts.

He finally looks up at the bartender drawing his pint. "What's the deal with these nuts?" he asks.

The bartender brings the man's pint over and sets it before him. "They're complimentary," he shrugs.

Howard Thaytaist, email

BUM DEAL

A WOMAN and her neighbour are chatting over the fence. "I've done a good deed today," the woman says. "I gave $100 to a bum."

"You gave a bum 100 bucks?" the amazed neighbour replies. "That's a lot of money to just throw away. What did your husband have to say about it?"

The woman replies: "He said 'thanks'."

Wendy De Zervitt, email

BUILDING FUND

A CRUMBLING old church building needed remodelling, so during his sermon the preacher made an impassioned appeal looking directly at the richest man in town.

At the end of the sermon, the rich man stood up and announced: "Pastor, I will contribute $1000."

> THOUGHT OF THE MONTH

The only way to get rid of a temptation is to yield to it -
Oscar Wilde

Just then, plaster fell from the ceiling and struck the rich man on the shoulder.

He promptly stood back up and shouted: "Pastor, I will increase my donation to $5000."

Before he could sit back down, plaster fell on him again, and this time he virtually screamed: "Pastor, I will double my last pledge."

He sat down, and a larger chunk of plaster fell on his head. He stood up once more and hollered: "Pastor, I will give $20,000!"

This prompted a deacon to shout: "Hit him again, Lord! Hit him again!"

Misty Reaswaiz, email

DOUBLE BOGEY

GOLFER: "I'd move heaven and earth to break 100 on this course."

Caddy: "Try heaven, you've already moved most of the earth."

Golfer: "Do you think my game is improving?"

Caddy: "Yes sir, you miss the ball much closer now."

Golfer: "Do you think I can get there with a five iron?"

Caddy: "Eventually."

Golfer: "Please stop checking your watch all the time. It's a distraction."

Caddy: "It's not a watch, it's a compass."

Golfer: "You've got to be the worst caddy in the world."

Caddy: "I don't think so sir. That would be too much of a coincidence."

T Woods, email

QUICK THINKING

A COUPLE of hunters are out in the woods when one of them falls to the ground. He doesn't seem to be breathing, and his eyes are rolled back in his head. The other man whips out his phone and calls 000. "I think my friend is dead! What can I do?" he gasps.

The operator replies: "All right, take it easy, I can help. First, let's make sure he's dead."

There is silence, and then a gunshot is heard.

Finally the hunter comes back on the line. "Okay. Now what?"

Bess Tuchek, email

NUN FOR ME, THANKS

A MAN is sitting outside his local, enjoying a cleansing ale, when he's suddenly accosted by a nun. "Drinking is sinful!" the nun cries. "No good will come of it!"

The man is taken aback, but asks: "Why do you think drinking is sinful, Sister?"

"My Mother Superior told me so," the nun replies.

"But how do you know what she's saying is true? Have you ever had a drink yourself?"

"I've never taken a drink in my life," the nun retorts.

"Then let me buy you a drink," the man says. "After having a drink, if you still believe that no good comes of it, I promise to abstain from alcohol for the rest of my life."

"But I'm a nun; I can't have anyone seeing me outside this pub drinking!"

"Don't worry," the man replies, "I'll get the bartender to put it in a teacup. No one will ever know."

Finally, the nun agrees, so the man goes into the bar to order their drinks.

"Another pint for me," he tells the bartender, "and a double scotch as well. But could you put the scotch in a teacup, please?"

The bartender replies: "It's that nun again, isn't it?"

Orville Abbott, email

WHATEVER WORKS

A FIRM hired a new secretary who wasn't the brightest crayon in the box. One day when she was typing, she turned to another secretary and said: "I'm almost out of typing paper. What do I do?"

"Just use the copier machine paper," the other responded. With that, the new secretary took her last remaining blank piece of paper, put it on the photocopier, and proceeded to make five blank copies.

N Tepryzin, email

WHAT REALLY MATTERS

A MAN in a bar saw a friend at a table, drinking by himself. Approaching the friend, he commented: "You look terrible. What's the problem?"

"My mother died in June," the friend replied, "and left me $10,000."

"Gee, that's tough," the first man said.

"Then in July," the friend continued, "my father died, leaving me $50,000."

"Wow, two parents gone in two months. No wonder you're depressed."

"And last month my aunt died, and left me $15,000."

"Three close family members lost in three months? How sad."

"Then this month," moaned the friend, "nothing!"

Cheepar Solls, email

ANIMAL URGES

A CAPTAIN in the foreign legion was transferred to a desert outpost. On his orientation tour he noticed a very old, seedy-looking camel tied out back of the enlisted men's barracks. He asked the sergeant leading the tour: "What's the camel for?"

"Well sir, it's a long way from anywhere, and the men have natural sexual urges, so when they do, uh, we have the camel," the sergeant replied.

The captain said: "Well if it's good for morale, then I guess it's all right with me."

After about six months at the fort, the captain couldn't deny his drives any longer. He told the sergeant: "Bring in the camel!"

The sergeant shrugged his shoulders and led the camel into the captain's quarters. The captain got a small step ladder and proceeded to have his way with the camel. As he stepped, satisfied, down from the ladder, and was buttoning his pants he asked the sergeant: "Is that how the enlisted men do it?"

The sergeant replied: "Well sir, they usually just use it to ride into town."

D Romedary, email

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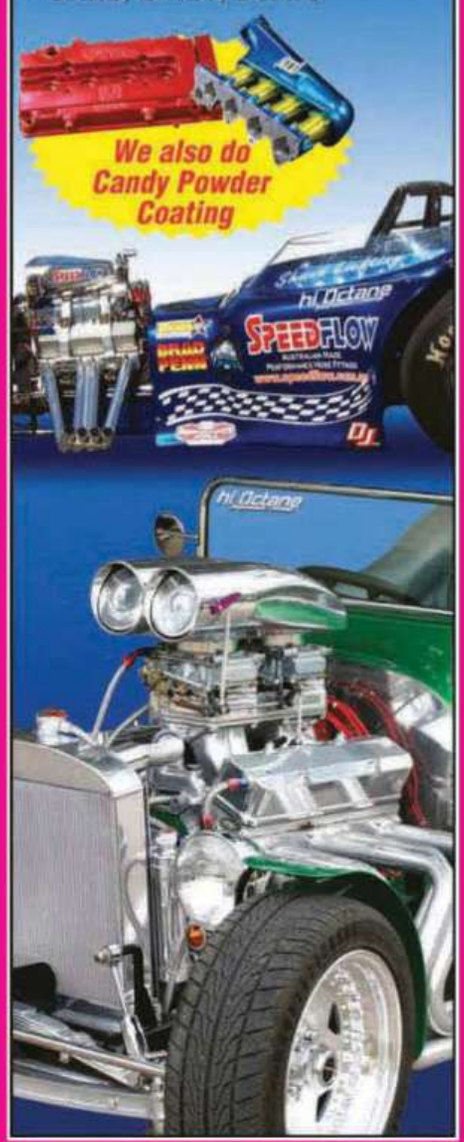

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NANANGO NEWSAGENCY

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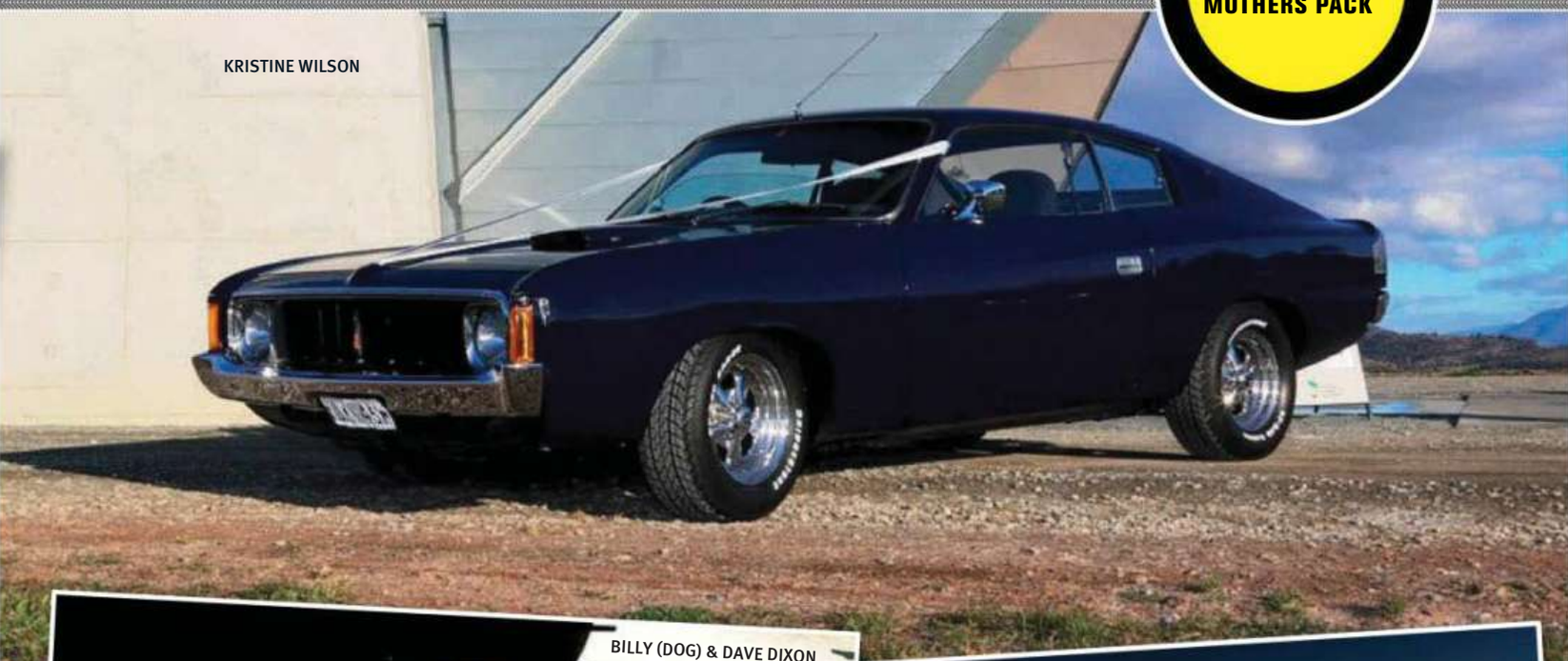
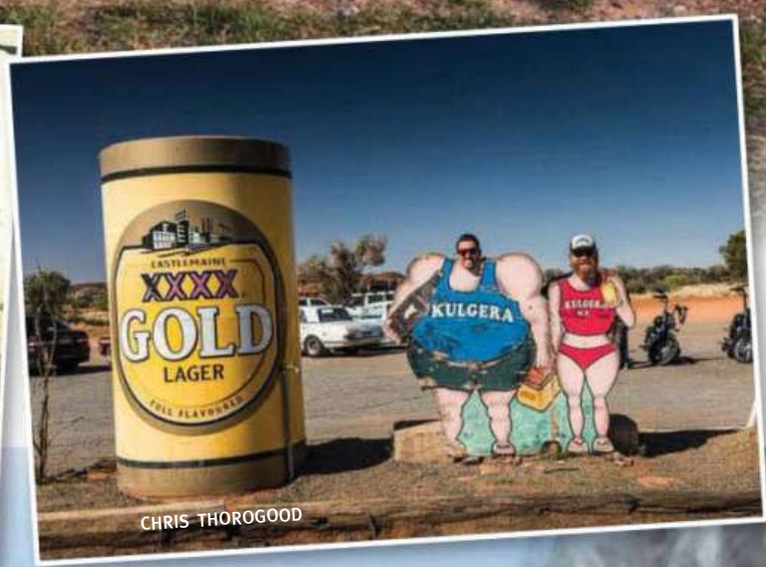


BILLY (DOG) & DAVE DIXON



CHRIS THOROGOOD

NATHAN JACOBS

CHRIS THOROGOOD

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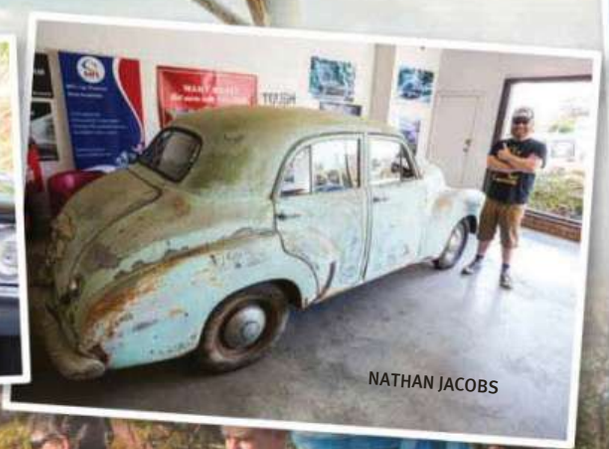

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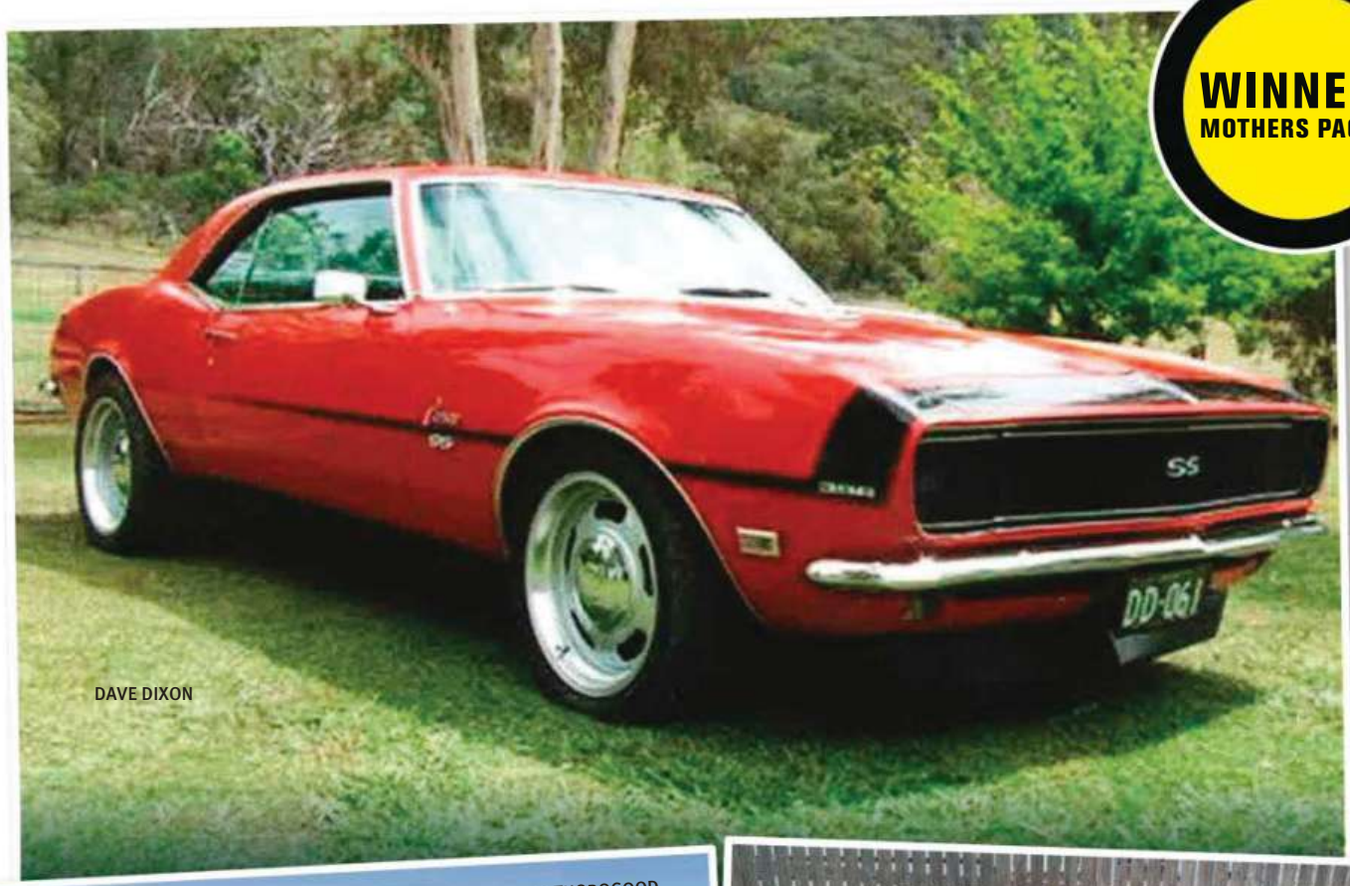

DAVE DIXON

CHRIS THOROGOOD

REDMOND

ADAM FOREMAN

MILL OF THE MONTH

STORY SCOTT TAYLOR PHOTOS NATHAN JACOBS

BELOW: The split bolt-together intake has been heavily ported and it's topped by a 1220cfm Pro Systems carb and a two-stage Wilson plate system. The valve on the rocker cover is a regulator for the belt-driven vacuum pump

FORD 427CI WINDSOR

> COMPETITIONENGINES.COM.AU, SPRINGVALE, VIC

BOOST is nice, but sometimes you just want raw, unadulterated power, and you want it right now. In that regard, nothing beats a tough NA motor with a squirt of giggle gas.

Zoran and Bobby from Competition Engines love a bit of boost, but more importantly they love horsepower in all shapes. You may remember Romeo Temelkovski's XB coupe (*SM*, Oct '12). Back then it was making 803hp on pump fuel and ran 9.76@140mph. Well the boys have given it a freshen-up, and it's now good for 850hp@8000rpm with 630lb-ft@5800rpm. If that's not enough, there's also a two-stage Wilson nitrous plate for another 300hp.

Inside it's a 9.5in-deck Dart block with a Lunati crank, Oliver rods and JE pistons. The short block is topped by a pair of billet Ultra Pro heads and a Blue Thunder split intake.

"Back in the day all the pro racers used to use Ford SC1 heads, but they cut them up and re-welded them to move things around," Zoran says. "Of course they'd leak water and stuff, so Don Losito came up with these billet Ultra Pro heads. They're perfect for something like this with a bit of gas.

"With this combo the coupe will run an eight on the gas. Drive it there, drive it home."

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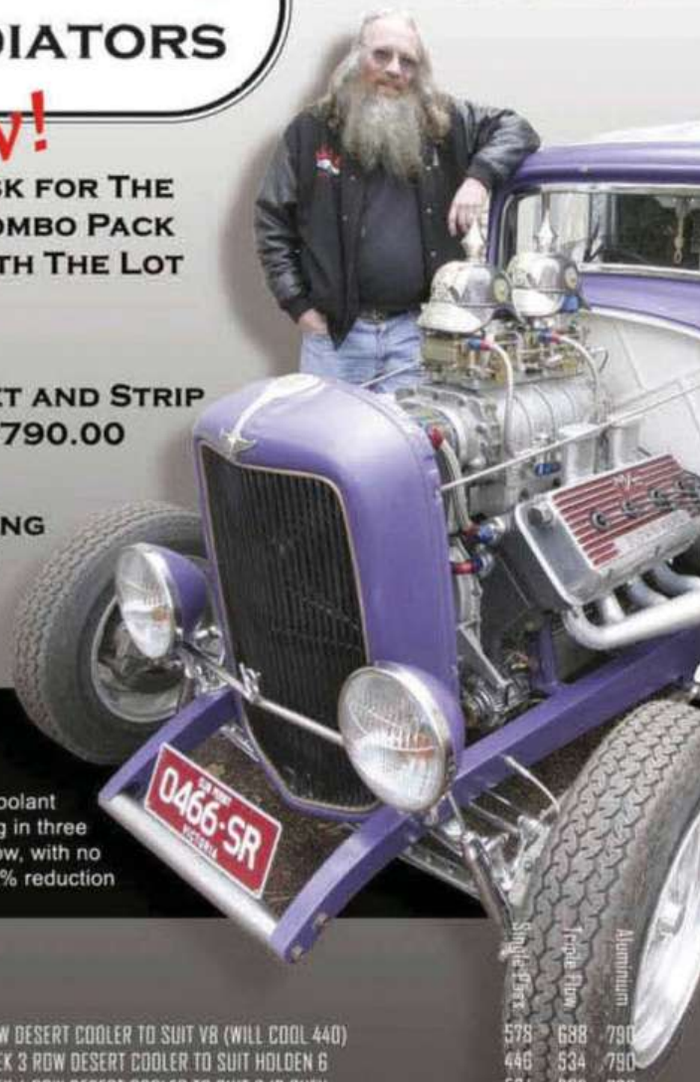

HOME OF THE TRIPLE FLOW

By building internal walls in the radiator, the coolant passes through the radiator three times resulting in three separate exposures to temperature dropping air-flow, with no adverse flow restriction. The result is an average 15% reduction in radiator outlet temperatures.

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CHEV '66, 67, 68 4 ROW DESERT COOLER TO SUIT SMALL BLOCK	704	809	790
FORD A MODEL '28 & '29 4 ROW DESERT COOLER TO SUIT S/B CHEV OR FORD	721	842	790
FORD A MODEL '30 & '31 4 ROW DESERT COOLER TO SUIT S/B CHEV OR FORD	721	842	790
FORD 'T' BUCKETS 4 ROW DESERT COOLER (Will cool big block) - ALL MOTORS	721	842	790
FORD '32 - '38 4 ROW DESERT COOLER TO SUIT S/B CHEV OR FORD	721	842	790
FORD '39 - '46 4 ROW DESERT COOLER TO SUIT S/B CHEV OR FORD	721	842	790
FORD MUSTANG 3 ROW DESERT COOLER TO SUIT MOST MODELS	468	561	790
FORD MUSTANG 4 ROW DESERT COOLER TO SUIT MOST MODELS	655	754	790
FORD XY, GT, HO, 3 ROW DESERT COOLER TO SUIT CLEVELAND OR WINDSOR	473	545	790
FORD XY, GT, HO, 4 ROW DESERT COOLER TO SUIT CLEVELAND OR WINDSOR	627	655	790
FORD XA - XB 3 ROW DESERT COOLER TO SUIT CLEVELAND	457	539	790
FORD XD - XF 3 ROW DESERT COOLER TO SUIT CLEVELAND	418	506	790
FORD XD - XF 4 ROW DESERT COOLER TO SUIT CLEVELAND	627	655	790
FORD CORTINA 3 ROW DESERT COOLER TO SUIT 6 CYL/V8	528	611	790
FORD CORTINA 4 ROW DESERT COOLER TO SUIT V8	627	743	790
VALIANT 3 ROW DESERT COOLER TO SUIT 6 CYL & SMALL BLOCK V8	479	545	790
VALIANT 4 ROW DESERT COOLER TO SUIT V8 (WILL COOL 440)	578	688	790
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HOLDEN FJ - EK 4 ROW DESERT COOLER TO SUIT S/B CHEV	594	682	790
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TORANA LC-LJ 4 ROW DESERT COOLER TO SUIT S/B CHEV OR HOLDEN V8	506	556	790
TORANA LH-LX 3 ROW DESERT COOLER TO SUIT HOLDEN 6	340	369	790
TORANA LH-LX 4 ROW DESERT COOLER TO SUIT S/B CHEV OR HOLDEN V8	506	556	790
FORD F100 - '70 - '79	583	699	790

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